

IN WOODS OF GOD-REALIZATION

The Complete Works of Swami Rama Tirtha

VOLUME X

SNAPSHOTS AND IMPRESSIONS

RAMA TIRTHA PRATISHTHAN

**The Rama Tirtha Publication League
LUCKNOW.**

PUBLISHED BY
THE RAMA TIRTHA PUBLICATION LEAGUE
LUCKNOW (INDIA).

1948.
Price Rs. 2'4'-

PRINTED BY
S. S. BHARGAVA
AT THE FINE PRESS,
LUCKNOW.

Publisher's Note.

This edition in an enlarged form of the "Various Aspects of Rama" has been brought out to enable our readers to acquaint themselves with what people say of the great saint. The collection is by no means exhaustive; nor is it systematic for which I apologise. The next edition is under the pen of editors of repute and in due course we hope to present it to the readers in a really attractive form.

R. S. Sinha,

M. L. A.

Honorary Secretary.

22.99.40

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4/205

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महात्मा गांधी का संदेश

स्वामी रामतीर्थ के उपदेशों का प्रचार होना ही चाहिए। स्वामी राम, भारत की नहीं, संसार की महान् आत्माओं में से थे। मैं उनका आदर करता हूँ।

मो० क० गांधी

Mahatma Gandhi's Message.

Swami Rama's teachings have got to be propagated. He was one of the greatest souls not only of India but of the whole world. I adore his ideals.

M. K. Gandhi.

महामना मदनमोहन मालवीय



स्वामी रामतीर्थ का एक ऐसा नाम है जिसे सुनते ही मेरे हृदय में अलौकिक आनन्द की लहर दौड़ जाती है। उन जैसे आत्मनिष्ठ किसी अन्य महात्मा से मेरी भेंट आज तक नहीं हुई।

आत्म-सुधार, आत्मज्ञान विषयक उनका संदेश आगे आने-वाली भारत-सन्तान को बड़ा उपयोगी सिद्ध होगा।

मदनमोहन मालवीय

Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya's Message.

The name of Swami Ram Tirtha is such as thrills my heart with ecstasy. I have never come across a greater self-realized Mahatma so far.

His message on self-purification and self-realization would be a great boon for the coming generation of the country.

M. M. Malaviya

SNAPSHOTS

Swami Sivananda Saraswati, Founder-
President, Divine Life Society.

Swami Rama is a great saint, who shines as a brilliant beacon star in India's firmament. To-day we miss his mortal presence at this fateful hour of this country's destiny, and probably, if he had lived now, he would have played a prominent part in bringing out amity between the conflicting elements and establishing real harmony and love among all parties. But he lives in our hearts as a dynamic soul-force, ever awake, eternal and imperishable.

He had infused in the hearts of the people a new joy, a happy conviction that it is for nothing we live in a miserable earth and we do not after a long struggle in the weary road of life, reach a scornful desert where our sorrows would be repeated again. He lived the practical philosophy, and as an exemplary figure in vedantic life, he has shown to the world that it is possible to rejoice in the bliss of Self even in this very life, and that every one can partake of this bliss, if only he is to sincerely strive for it.

May he work through all for the attainment of good will, blessedness and human unity!

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Swami Ram Tirtha, I heard once when I was a young man. I have no doubt that he was a most powerful factor in the spiritual development of the country 40 years ago and that his influence still subsists.

Acharya J. B. Kripalani.

The life and sayings of Swami Ram Tirtha will remain a source of perennial inspiration to his countrymen. A God-intoxicated soul, he had realised the presence of God everywhere and in all mankind. His radiant smile and countenance shed fragrance wherever he went. The best homage that we can pay to his memory is to make a solemn resolve that we shall be pure and selfless, loving and tolerant, in our daily life and activities.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan.

Swami Rama Tirtha's life and work will continue to inspire us for a long time to come.

Dr. Amaranatha Jha.

Swami Rama Tirtha was one of the most resplendent figures in India in the early years of this century. By his speeches and writings and above all, by the magnetic charm of his personality, he made on his contemporaries a lasting impression.

India is free, but not free from troubles. Material and spiritual problems stare us in the face. At a time like this the words of Swami Ram Tirtha bring to us hope and faith and happiness. Let us dedicate ourselves to the service of India, and live upto the ideals of Indian culture. There can be no nobler message than that of Swami Rama Tirtha as conveyed in these words.

"Mould and adopt the past to the present and boldly launch your pure and strong present in the race of the future. We cannot do without our inheritance from the

forefathers; the society which renounces it must be destroyed from without, the society in which it dominates must be destroyed from within."

Sri S. K. Patil, President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee.

In my young days Swami Rama Tirtha was one of those from whom I derived my inspiration for the service of my motherland. There are thousands of young men in this country whose life-currents must have been fashioned by the philosophy of this great thinker of India.

Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Kashmir.

The message of Sri Rama Tirtha was never more needed as today when spite and hatred rules men's minds. Humanity must march along in eternal bonds of fellowship and brotherly love. To whatever creed one may belong the end of life for all men is the same. Sages like Sri Rama Tirtha have shown us the way to avoid clashes and strife and to go in search of God in the way he did.

Dr. Kailas Nath Katju

I have not had the honour and the privilege of personal acquaintance with the revered Swamiji, but there is just one tie between him and me. We come from the same—Forman Christian College in Lahore. When I joined college in 1901 Swamiji's name was on everybody's lips. He had been a lecturer, I believe, in Mathematics, but had a short while back renounced the world and had left Lahore, but the Principal and the Professors and the older students described in glowing language, for the benefit of the freshmen, what a personality he was. It is a great national tragedy that he was not spared to us and he was called away so soon when he was at the prime of his powers and when he had begun to attract around him in ever increasing numbers people of all classes and creeds and communities. His great message of love and humanity would have been priceless in these days when the Nation is passing through great tribulations and sorrows and suffering. But all great men, whether living or dead bless their con-

temporaries with their teachings and those teachings ever remain as a pole star to guide us in our everyday activities. To everyone whose heart in these days is sick with sorrow and anguish, I draw attention to the sustaining message of the great Swami Rama Tirtha and ask him to find comfort and sustenance in that deep well of universal love to which Swamiji has invited us all for ever.

Swami Vivekanand and Swami Rama Tirtha were twin souls who shed lustre on our country 40 years ago and though many years have elapsed since they departed from this world, the impressions that they produced upon their contemporaries and the spiritual message which they have left behind for the enlightenment of their countrymen for all time, is proving and shall prove everlastingly an inspiration. Swami Rama Tirtha was a great soul. The influence of such personalities transcends all time.

Sri B. G. Kher, Premier, Bombay.

There are many lessons to be learnt from the life of Swami Rama Tirtha which was

wonderful and dazzling. *Tyaga* or renunciation occupies the highest place in the religious make-up of the Hindus. It must be *Satvik* as defined by Lord Sri Krishna. The earnest seeker can benefit a great deal from the rich experiences of Swami Rama Tirtha which he has recorded in his unique style. I hope that the citizens of free India will not lose the advantages of a rich heritage and insist on dragging the country through all sorts of wild experiments which can only retard its progress in the great spiritual pilgrimage which everyman is ordained to embark upon.

Sri Tushar Kanti Ghosh,
(Amrita Bazar Patrika.)

Swami Rama Tirtha is one of the outstanding saints who have sanctified our Motherland. He has long passed away from this mortal world but his spiritual influence remains for ever. Its force is specially felt on a sacred occasion like this by those who turn towards him. Men of his type have made India intrinsically great.

**Shri Anand T. Hingorani, Editor,
"Gandhi Series",**

Swami Rama's lofty teachings, permeated as they are with eternal joy and bliss, have illumined many a dark recess of an unhappy heart and have been an unfailing source of inspiration and elevation to hundreds and thousands of fellow-sojourners on the pathway of life all over this world. Swamiji, as his speeches and writings show, was verily an embodiment of Sat-Chit-Anand (Truth-Knowledge-Bliss). May his blessings be on us all !

Shri Sri Prakasa.

The great Swami Rama Tirtha has been a source of inspiration to many, and I pray that his good influence may long live and bring joy and happiness to individuals and spread true brotherhood and solidarity in the people as a whole.

**Shri S. A. Brelvi
(Bombay Chronicle).**

Swami Rama Tirtha was one of the great sons of India. May his message live long to

inspire and render a distinct service to ailing humanity.

Prof. Tan Yun-Shan
(Santi Niketan).

It is a great work to keep alive, promote and spread the noble teachings of Swami Rama Tirtha. He was Sat-chid-ananda personified.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

The teachings of Swami Rama should be propagated with vigour.

St. Nihal Singh.

I greatly loved and respected Tirath Ram-Goswami, later the Swami Rama Tirtha.

Sri Jairamdas Daulatram.

Let us interpret Swami Rama's message in the light of India's need of today and realise God and Truth in ceaseless and selfless service of the needy and the weak by developing in them the spirit of self-reliance.



Today the world is torn and tattered by terrors and tortures. German Nazism has dished up Austria, devoured Czechoslovakia, and is destroying Danzig, and seems to be dreaming for Poland and Roumania. Italian Fascism has masticated Abyssinia, gulped up Albania, and is coveting Jugoslovia and possibly Greece, and is also boldly bidding for Tunis. Japanese militarism is bent on annihilating the most ancient civilization of China and is heaping indignities on the much boasting England; and might be dreaming for India. Russian communism has experimentally upset the well established principles of property and personal labour and is keeping its attitude of sympathetic negotiationism in inter-statal affairs. Spain has witnessed the extermination of its Republic at the instance of Italian Fascism and Anglo-French non-interventionism. The great monarchic constitutionalism of England is curling its tail round and round to appease the unappeasables and to woo those who are heartless. French determined democratism ate up its

treaty with Czechoslovakia and is dittoing the English policy purblindly. American rationalism is forcefully warning the aggressive axis but with little result. Gandhian spiritualism declares itself the only remedy for existing evils but finds itself not yet potent for international application. India has its own wails and woes. The greatest of its woes is political tutelage. The internal disunity, be it communal or ideological or martial, has ever been its grave in the historical past, and is presently to our utmost misfortune shaking the foundation of the emancipation movement. Hindu Muslim unity is becoming difficult and difficult, Gandhi its greatest exponent is not seeing the light for it. Communalism is culminating in riots, disfiguring the fair name of India and to the much satisfaction of the enemies of our progress. Gandhistic moral philosophy of politics is being challenged by Royists in principle and by Subhas Bose in application. Jawaharlal; the Hope of India, is declaring that his mind is befogged and can't see things through. Internal disruption and corruption in the Congress is hollowing the very foundation, and the mighty fabric, built thereon by constant efforts of the

past pioneers, can not hold for long, if such things are not controlled ere long. High Command has come in for criticism. Nariman, Khare, and Subhas have felt one by one disgruntled. Labourers and Kisans have become greatly restive. Strikes and demonstrations have become the order of the day. The princes intoxicated by their own power and supported by the Paramount Power are taking their shelter with the use of the rifles; and any thought of attempting to reach the hearts of the people is considered by them as tabooed. Muslims are unseemly fighting amongst themselves on the issue of *Tabarra* and *Madeh-sahaba*. This is a heart-rendering description of the surrounding situation yet it is true. In fine the soul in man has lost all its spiritual moorings. The question arises as to who should take it upon himself to re-instate those spiritual moorings in the soul of man. The reply unhesitatingly is that those persons are the young men of India. But alas, the ideology of our young man of today does not bode good for in this respect. They are dis-spirited and dejected, liable to fall at the shadow of the difficulties. They care much for material furnishings,

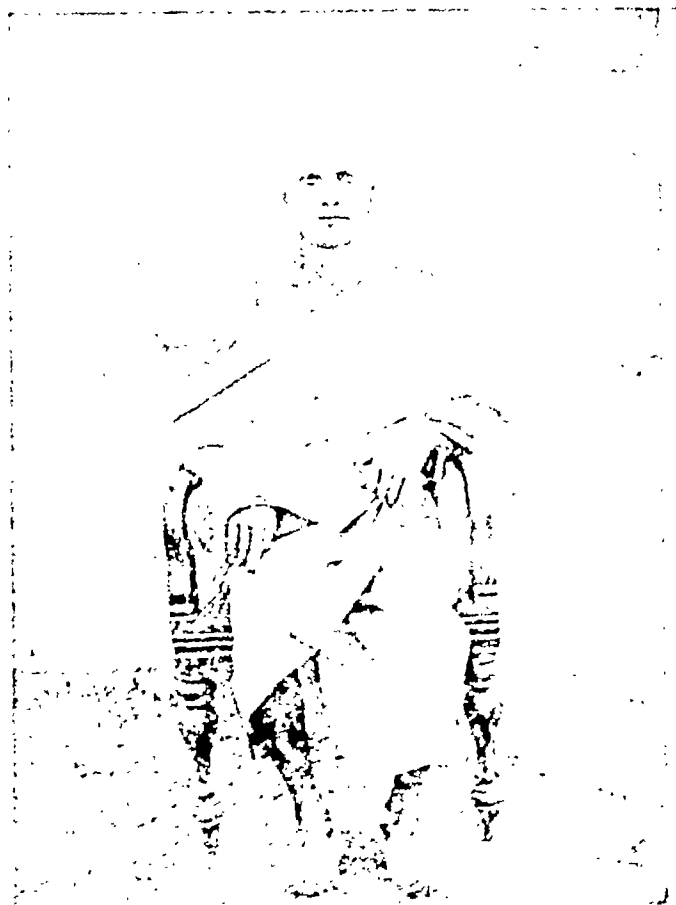
material self and power, and when the latter things elude them, they think themselves doomed and doomed to eternity. They are oblivious to spiritual attainments, and think that spiritual harvests are only for a few and for those few who are crank and crazy. Their minds are pivoted on the limitations of the soul, which are non-existent; and not on its unimaginable possibilities. Feeling helpless against circumstances they drift along with the polluted stream of society, and make no attempt to stand up, purge and purify that stream. They require some powerful impetus and enlightened inspiration. The life of Swami Rama gives such inspiration; and if the world's terrors and tortures are to go and if India's wails and woes are to vanish, young men of India and the world should imbibe the spirit of Swami Rama and knit his teachings into the practical doings of their lives. Swami Rama ended his earthly existence measured by the length of time at the age of thirty three years only, but continues his spiritual existence upto this day and will continue his existence for thousands of years. His life is the embodiment of the teaching that soul knows no bonds, no barriers, and masters the

mightiest impediments, if it sees the light of itself. He was born in a poor family and was deprived of motherly affections too soon. Weak and sickly he grew, but passed his Entrance examination in the first division, and in spite of father's opposition entered the University in the indigent circumstances and succeeded at the Intermediate Examination. Then he joined his B. A. against the dictates of his father; father not only stopped the help but billeted his wife on him. But the soul of Swami Rama could not be cowed down and pursued its course unflinchingly. He fed himself for three pice a day and restricted his diet to one meal a day when his baker refused to provide him two meals for three pice. But he did it uncompainingly with full faith in his Creator. In such circumstances he made himself the best student of his class; but to the wild amazement of his teachers he failed in the B. A. in English by a few marks though his aggregate stood the highest. His teachers helped him to their best to get his answer books re-examined but strict regulations came in the way. But Rama's soul remained undaunted even at such a failure and in such circumstances. His Scholarship which

he got at his Intermediate success, now stopped and he had to literally starve himself for a number of days, but his starvation all the more resolved him in his aims. He rejoined the college penniless and accepted board and lodging at the hands of Jhandumal, college confectioner who made a sincerely free offer. He passed this year in extremely narrow circumstances, and at the end of the year succeeded in his B. A. Examination in the first division at its top and placed a unique record of marks in the University. He earned two scholarships consolidated to Rupees sixty per month. His financial embarrassments were got over but he shared his surplus money with his Gurn Dhanna Bhakta. He joined his M. A. and secured the degree with credit. During his M. A. class, his former Principal, Mr. Bell recommended his name for a foreign Scholarship of £. 200 a year. The scholarship was meant for the best student of the University and Rama was indisputably the best, but anyhow the scholarship went to some one else. Rama did not feel it at all. He tried for several jobs with strong recommendations of his Principal but to meet only failures. Ultimately such a brilliant scholar had to open a



श्री स्वामी रामतीर्थ ।



SHRI SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA.

AGRA.

1902.



FOREWORD.

Various aspects of Swami Rama's life have been depicted in the following pages. These aspects were represented by several admirers and lovers of Rama on his 65th Birthday Anniversary, that was celebrated on the day following the last Diwali, viz. on October 23, 1938, by the Rama Tirtha Publication League, which was established this very day in 1919, to publish in different languages, his literature in general and that of other saints in particular, in decent style and handsome get-up, preserving the purity and originality of the subject and selling them at the least possible price. The aspects referred to above are not all the aspects of his life. They are some of them, and they show that this great Teacher of

the world has, by setting his own example, taught us the most important lesson, that was taught in ancient times, by the authors of the Upanishadas that "One who knoweth Self knoweth all." or "One who finds himself has need of finding nothing else."

2. There is no doubt that best study for man-kind is man, as acts speak louder than words. If we study the life of this hero, we find good many lessons therein. His illustrious disciple His Holiness R. S. Narayana Swami did, on the 64th birthday of the Saint that was celebrated on Nov. 3, 1937, explain in detail what inner power was at work which made Swami Rama an idol of our heart. He warned us not to be carried away by external imitations. That would be like putting the cart before the horse. He said it was wrong to suppose that any external surrounding or environment like poverty made him great. Neither poverty nor riches have any such power by themselves, though they help them who utilize them. Rama himself warns us not to attribute any external reason to any body's downfall or rise. But this is what we exactly do and

mis-interpret facts of history which never lie on the surface. He further explained that it was the *right direction of thoughts and education of heart*, which contributed to the greatness of Swami Rama. This method is open to all. It is a royal road which can be used with the greatest possible benefit by all irrespective of caste, colour or creed. In whatever circumstances one may be, one can, if he wills, direct his thoughts in the right channel and so educate the heart that it may flow only in that direction, which has been chalked out by 'Vichar' and 'Manan'. He traced out the evolution of man and lucidly explained how it can go on unhampered in the aforesaid manner.

3. Prakash cannot conclude it without explaining the following Four Lessons, which he has culled this year from the life of this world Teacher. They are given in his own words:—

(I) The first of them is "*Convert your stumbling blocks into the stepping stones.*"

1. The anger of his father, when the boy Rama did not give up his

studies and did not enter into life after passing through the Entrance Examination, as was ordered by his father, who then stopped his pittance to him for his further studies:

2. His child-marriage, as he was married at the age of 9 or 10;
3. His poverty, as he had to live upon three pice a day for some time,

These were the thorns of no less serious type in his way, but he trampled them all by his strong will force and thus he converted the blocks into the stepping stones to reach his goal. How he trampled them is taught by the subsequent lessons.

(11) The *second* lesson is that *the world is bound to co-operate with him, who feels himself one with the world.* This feeling is Universal Love, where there is no room for hatred against any. This is the Key of leading a happy and successful life. When we feel love within, the outward blocks

are converted into stepping stones. When Rama landed in America, a friend said to him "You will die of hunger in this Land of dollars, if you have got no money with you nor have any introductory letter to any one here." Rama then laughed and said that "Rama is not a slave of hunger and thirst, and besides this the whole world loves Rama, and Rama loves the whole world."

(III) But in order to feel love within, we are required to have *self surrender* or *Atma-smarpan*. This is the 3rd lesson which we have to learn. When we sacrifice our interests for an individual person, he becomes our friend and co-operates with us. Similarly when we sacrifice ourselves for All or God, the whole Universe is bound to co-operate with us.

(IV) But we have no courage to surrender or sacrifice ourselves, unless we have faith in ourselves. This is the last but not the least lesson that we

have to learn from the life of this great Saint. This faith is also called *Self-reliance*. Rama has fully explained it in his essay on Atma-Kripa. It was his Self reliance or faith, that made him the greatest sage of his time. Self-reliance is not a faith in the little self of three-cubits-and-a-half, nor is it a faith in an extra-cosmic or external God; but on the other hand, it is the *faith* in, nay the *realisation* of the Self or God within. Unless one's little or individual self becomes one with the Big or Universal Self, one cannot be said to have self-reliance or faith. This man of faith is never dull or idle nor does he remain a slave of circumstances; but on the other hand he becomes the master of circumstances as he himself is all action and energy. In all the physical, mental and spiritual realms, he shines in glory, if he wills. Swami Rama's activity in physical plane is evident from the fact that by physical exercise he be-

came stout and strong from a thin, lean weakling and stood a head in a thirty miles race in America. His mental activity is evident from the fact that in his B. A. Examination he solved all the 13 questions of a paper within time, and wrote upon his answer book "Examine any nine out of thirteen". This was in response to the examiner's note on the question paper "Solve any nine out of thirteen." His spiritual activity is as clear as the Sun at noon. He not only studied almost all the important spiritual Scriptures of the world, but he solved almost all the spiritual problems in his short life of three-decades - and - three years. Thus he trampled all impediments in his way and proceeded onward. Nay, he converted them into stepping stones, hence he blooms like a lotus from a muddy tank. Blessed are those who take to heart the lessons from Rama's life and have *Self-Realisation*, that is the goal of

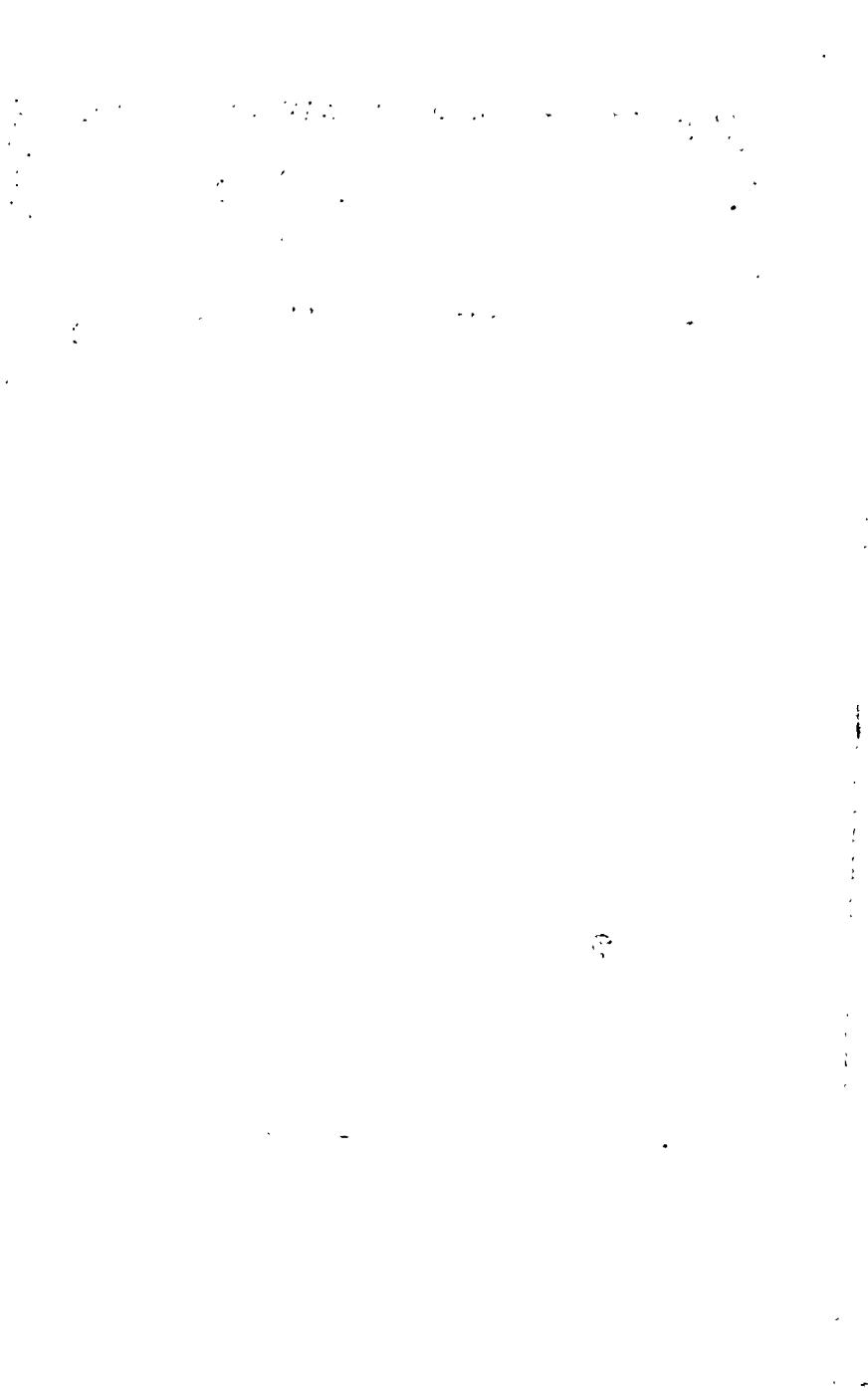
humanity.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti !

Shanti Prakash,

Ram Tirtha Publication League }
Lucknow, February 26, 1939. }





श्री स्वामी रामतीर्थ ।

(अमेरिकन प्राफेसर)



SHRI SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA, M. A.

AMERICAN PROFESSOR.

SWAMI RAMA AS A GREAT HOPE FOR HUMANITY

by

Dr. Radha Kumud Mukerjee M. A., PH. D., P.R.S.,

The life of Swami Rama Tirtha is a great hope for humanity. It is an example of a man developing into a super-man under the commonest conditions of life, like a lotus blooming into beauty out of its muddy origins. Swami Rama Tirtha had his full share of "the ills to which flesh is heir". His greatest handicap in life was his marriage at ten. He had to attend a school from a distance of six miles. After passing the Entrance Examination of the Punjab University, he joined the College at Lahore where he lived in a room on a monthly rent of Re.1/- and could hardly spend more than Rs.5/- a month on his education. When he joined the B. A. class against his father's wishes, he was dis-owned by his father. At this time, after paying for his lodging, college fees, and his wife's living, he had three pice a day left for his meal. Very soon he subsisted on one meal a day. He had a special gift for mathematics. Once he worked day and night for full 24 hours to solve a mathematical

problem. This zeal and capacity for work shows the secret of Swami Rama Tirtha's greatness. He was afterwards appointed as a professor of Mathematics in the Forman Christian College, Lahore where he reached the turning point of his life. It was due to the study of the Gita. He atonce became mad after Krishna uttering His name and fainting on the banks of the river Ravi. At *Kathas* he would burst and fall into a trance.

2. From the cult of Bhakti, he soon grew into a Vedantist. "The mere sound of the recital of the Veda" says he, "brings on a trance, and I am immersed in the unfathomable bliss. His Vedantism now made him renounce the world and become a regular Sannyasi. He achieved Enlightenment on the banks of the Holy Ganges at Rishi Kesh. He then proceeded to live in the Uttara Khand on the Himalyan heights. He could not resist the call of the Himalyas. It was Deep calling unto Deep. Swami Rama surrendered himself to the spiritual charm of the Himalayas in whose depths he realised God, as the Virat Purusha. He expresses his experience in the following remarkable words: "Nature is my body, the rivers are my arteries, the mountains are my bones It is a sacrilege

to walk on the rocks with any socks or shoes on. The touch of the bare ground inspires omniscience in the bare foot. My flesh and the flesh of the rocks must touch each other fully to know each other fully..... I am Shiva. The Malabar and Coromandal are my two legs, the deserts of Rajputana my breast, the Vindhya-chalas are my loins and I spread my arms to the West as well as to the East. The Himalyas are my tressed head, and in my curls winds the pure silver Ganga. I am Indra; I am Man; I am Bird, Beast, I am God."

3. Here Swami Rama Tirtha speaks as the supreme poet of Nature. Worship of Nature is with him a part of the worship of Nature's God. There is here no division between the Objective and Subjective, between the Real, and the Ideal, between the Material and the Spritual. All experience is one. It is that of the One in the Many and of the Many in the One.

4. With his inner enlightenment now achieved as a part of his blood, and fully confirmed and established as the abiding state of his mind, Swami Rama now thinks of his fellow human beings whom he can now serve with the best offering of which he was capable, the offering

of the perfected life.

5. The best service one can render to society and to his country is by his self-fulfilment, by the dedication to it of all that he is capable of. Every individual must first rise to the full height of his stature himself before serving his fellows. Unfortunately, the idealism of youth does not always give them the patience to submit to an arduous process of self-development. This necessary period of preparation for a man's mission in life is very well described by Swami Rama who so deeply realised its need. Says he, "The world is concerned only with my blossoms, and they taste me when I appear before them in my flowers. But they do not know how much I have to labour under-ground, in the dark recesses, in my roots that gather the food for flowers and the fruits. I am now in my roots. It is the silence of Gaudapada and Govindacharya that was at the back of the brilliant success of Shankercharya.

6. The Swami now figures as a preacher holding spell-bound vast audiences at various centres. Like Swami Vivekanand, Swami Rama Tirtha carried the message of truth beyond the bounds of India, to Japan and America. He

worked for more than two years as a spritual ambassador of India to the world outside, bringing to it her message of Supreme Truth. That Truth is one and knows of no national frontiers or barriers of space and time. Swami Rama's lectures in the West were so effective because of their universal appeal and the appeal which has a compelling force when it comes from a direct vision of Truth.

7. With all his spiritual pré-possessions, Swami Rama was fully alive to India's politics and its consequences to her Indigenous Culture and Sprituality. In those days of India's serfdom even the movements of a Saint and religious preacher like the Swami were not free of the tender attention of the Police and the C. I. D. His sensitive soul burst out: "I wish as an Indian that my country should be free. Free it shall be one day, but whether this Rama secures its freedom or a thousand other Ramas, no one knows."

8. The true Saint is the best of patriots. Religion in its essence cannot be divorced from politics. India has throughout the ages down to the time of Mahatma Gandhi has spiritualized her politics. The great Buddha with all his detachment from the world took the liveli-

est interest in the politics of his times. He was in world and yet not of it. His spirituality was consistent with the positivist ideal of social service. That is why the Buddha's advice was sought in matters of State by kings and emperors as well as the Heads of the Republics. Kings Bimbisara and Ajatashatru, Prasenajit or Virudhaka were constantly seeking his advice as that of their guide, philosopher and friend equally with the Republican Sakyas, Mallas, or Lichchhavis. The true Indian religion does not see any difference between the Spiritual and the Secular, between Religion and Politics.

9. Swami Rama was a great leader of men towards Truth and Freedom. His death does not end his work. He still lives with us in writings and the many institutions created by the inspiration of his life and lessons. It is time that the Rama Tirtha Literature should be fully conserved and given the widest publicity as a most potent agency of our social and spiritual uplift.



SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA AS THE GREATEST POET MYSTIC OF MODERN INDIA

BY

Dr RADHA KAMAL MUKARJEE M. A. PH. D.

There is found today a complete divorce of the life and works of the Colleges and Universities in India from the spiritual traditions and mystical experiences that were treasured by seekers after truth in the past. In the midst of the present Godless education it is, therefore, refreshing and stimulating to turn to the life and experiences of Swami Rama Tirtha, who was a brilliant student and teacher of the University and had a passion for higher truth in Mathematics and who yet achieved a spiritual insight and a serenity of knowledge worthy of India's greatest spiritual teachers. Like many College students of to-day, he was handicapped by extreme poverty and an early marriage. There were days when he had not a single pice with him and took his meals from a kind college confectioner, who early recognised his genius

and the charm of his sweet loving personality. Even in his college days, he had his mystic trances. It was Krishna the flute-player, whose true notes off and on sounded in his ears weaning him from the path of egotism and impurity. Thus the boy prepared himself both intellectually and spiritually for his noble mission. He had an amazing love of knowledge for its own sake. He would give up his daily meals for the sake of buying the oil of his midnight lamp for reading and yet his face, as he worked ascetically night and day, shone with a radiance which is always found in the face of the true seeker of knowledge. For some time he worked as the Professor of Mathematics in the Forman Christian College and in the Oriental College, Lahore. But all the while he developed his spiritual love-life steeped in the mystical poetry of Sufism and the religious love of the Punjab and in the philosophy of Goethe, Emerson and Thoreau. Full of thelove he laughed at his pavilion and smiled at pain and in the night his affectionate wife, like the wife of Shri Chaitanya, gazed with wonder at the ceaseless flow of tears of joy along his cheeks that gave them no sleep.

Endowed with an imaginative temperament he was a true lover of beauty in Nature and in the enjoyment of the bloom of flowers and grasses; the song of the rivers and the chorus of the birds he participated in a celestial festival in which ultimately Man, Nature and Nature's God were all melted in an all-composing bliss.

2. Swami Rama turned to be the monk and the minister of that ancient gospel of Oneness, which we sometimes describe as the Advaita Vedanta. Pūran Singh narrates that it was his meeting with Swami Vivekanand at Lahore and the stimulating example and discourse of this bold intellectual monk from Bengal that ultimately contributed to Sri Rama's final choice of the ochre robe. It was in the forests near Rishikesh that he attained Self-knowledge and Self-hood.

3. The distinctive character of Swami Rama's mystical consciousness is the expression and expansion of the truth of the Many in the One and the One in the Many through most ardent poetic channels.

4. Swami Rama is modern India's greatest poet mystic. His poems are a marvel of religious depth and sincere expansiveness of the self. He

felt the Oneness with the trees of the forests and found the rocks alive with what beats in man. How beautifully he has often expressed himself. It is I that appear as beautiful flowers in the garden. It is I that smile with the bewitching faces of all the fairies. It is I that make the muscles of the warriors that fight. I am the all. I shine in the lightening; I roar in the thunder; I flutter in the leaves; I hiss in the winds; I roll in the surging seas; I am in the throbbing breast of the lover; I am also in the smile of the proud beloved. These are words of infinite passion and bliss, reminiscent of the profound poetry of the Upanishads and yet possessing a freshness and spontaneity that make these a remarkable contribution to the religious experience of humanity.

5. Such language springs from that eternal matrix of *Anandam*, in which Yajnavalkya said every thing lives, moves and has its being. With this perennial joy in his soul he would call the rivers his arteries and his bones the mountains and would touch the grass under his feet with endearing words. With pencil, paper and ink-pot, he would re-establish a loving relation by giving them pet names, and he

would call the Mother 'Gangi'. When he had Arjuna's vision of the world-body of his spiritual Self and uttered with tears and smiles mystically and majestically: "The land of India is my own body. The Malabar and Coromandal are my two legs, Cape Comorin is my feet, the deserts of Rajputana my breast, the Vindhya-chals are my loins, and I spread my arms to the West and to the East. The Himalayas are my tressed head, and in my curls winds the pure silver Ganga. I am India. I am Siva" The individual stretches beyond the frontiers of his body, and his mental and social self as his body, when he identifies the Universal Soul with the self. Much in the same manner modern biology is extending the limits of the individual beyond his environment beyond space and time. Seldom has the man of God in India been the man of action. Swami Rama always full of the knowledge and love of Oneness, concentrated in the depth of his over-soul and deriving his inspiration off and on from the silence of the Himalayan forests, had a message for the whole world and he had the same passion of a missionery as Swami Vivekanand. He travelled to Japan and to

America where he preached the Vedanta and Buddhism in the spirit of modern science and philosophy. Many people in these countries still remember the catholicity of this theologian, the simplicity of this saint and the burning love of Nature of this poet of God.

6. On his return from the West he dedicated himself to the cause of Practical Vedanta, the cause of love between man and man, caste and caste, community and community. "A person" he would say, "can never realise his unity with God except when the unity with the whole nation throbs in every fibre of his frame." It was in this manner that like Swami Vivekananda but with a more poetic fervour and romantic passion he revived the ancient truth of the One in the Many in its social and national application to the Indian situation.

7. The poet-mystic, as he turns to the affairs of men, shows a clarity of vision for the future and stress of the fundamentals for ethical and social renovation which the country must lay to heart. Sri Rama had two important messages for political India. The first is his majestic and thorough Indian conception and worship of the country as the *Ishta-Deva*, his *Saligrama* his sweet

Krishna and glorious Mahadeva. With these is associated of course the idea of philanthropy as worship, of service to the living Narayana as the starving peasant of India. To serve the poor and the Have-not is to serve God. Swami Rama wanted every man and woman of India not merely to dedicate the self to the service of millions of starving but living Narayanas but also to defy the entire motherland so that all its manifestations may inspire us with devotion to the Whole. Such is the spiritual transformation of Indian nationalism rooted in God consciousness which is the poet mystic's great contribution to India's political consciousness. Another important message of his is of great significance for the Socialism that is now developing in this country. Swami Rama believed in the spiritual efficacy and dignity of manual labour. To dedicate one's intellectual powers and talents to the country is the spirit of the true modern *Brahmin* in India; to be ever ready is the spirit of the modern *Kshatriya*; to hold one's property only in trust for the nation is the spirit of the modern *Vaishya*. But to realise God, One has to work out all these *Dharmas* through one's

hands and feet. Simple, silent creative labour for all for the highest and for the lowest in the country is the path to all-love and all-freedom. This is essentially a modern note, the assertion of the dignity, joy and freedom of one's sacred work in the cottage and in the field, in agriculture, art and handicraft as a means of recapturing peace and freedom for all. How sincerely and yet how comprehensively did Swami Rama here anticipate the exhortation of Mahatma Gandhi which the nation needs not regarding the compelling duty of simple, manual labour! India must spiritualise her politics and abjure the modern Western brand of bargaining in order to elicit the highest devotions and noblest sacrifices of the masses and to eliminate from politics the violence and strategy of race and class struggle. But if Mahatma Gandhi fails to spiritualise politics who succeeds? Swami Ram wore himself out in this noble task. The sword was too keen for the scabbord. At the early age of 33 he laid himself to rest, romantic in death as in life, in the cold, bubbling waters of the Ganges in Tehri on the beautiful festival day of Diwali.

8. In many respects Swami Rama is a unique and blessed personality. It is sweeter more compelling and more appealing to the educated mind than that of many religious teachers of modern India. A great deal of it is due to his innate gifts of communion with everything and everybody but same is also to be attributed to his wide catholicity of interests which guided him easily from biology to mathematics and from Hindu and Sufi philosophy to Spinoza, James and modern American literature. There are few things more touching in the religious literature of the world than his strange mystical anticipation of his own death and his poetical expression of immortality. "I care not for this body for I have enough of bodies to use. I can wear those divine silver thread, the beams of the moon, and live. I can roam as a divine minstrel, putting on the guise of hilly streams and mountain brooks. I can dance in the waves of the sea. I am the breeze that proudly walk and I am wind inebriated. All these shapes of mine are wandering shapes of change. I came down from yonder hills, raised the dead awakened the sleeping, unveiled the fair faces of some

and wiped the tears of a few weeping ones. The bulbul and the rose both I saw and I confronted them. I touched this, I touched that. I doff my hat and off I am. Here I go and there I go and none can find me".

9. Swami Rama's life was itself a religious poem, short and lyrical in its intensity, and yet sublime and comprehensive. The world is the page, his life the poem and the shining gold in which the letters of the poem are written is that creative and spontaneous joy which is the essence of cosmic manifestation. *Anandat Khalu imani bhutani jayante* May we all share in this *anandam*!



SWAMI RAMA AS THE JIVAN MUKTA OR EMANCIPATED SOUL

by

(Dr. Kali Prasad M. A. LL. B.)

Swami Rama is an eternal presence. He is a symbol, an 'idea', an idea mightier by far than the physical frame which enshrined it. It is true that he lived and died but the divinity in him continues in its immortality and will always be a source of inspiration and hope to all who desire to understand and realise the true purpose and nature of their Being. Swami Rama was not a philosopher, nor an ideological visionary, because he knew that philosophy, as Buddha has said, "purifies none; peace alone does." Philosophical speculation is a singularly fruitless pastime and its incompetence to solve the problems of life and reality has been widely recognised. The rigors of logic and intellection are well-known to produce at best only a hallucinatory sense of self-complacency. To be significant philosophy must be informed by insight born of experience. In this sense Indian philosophy is predominantly pragmatic and empirical and Indian

philosophers and sages are pre-eminently experimentalists.

2. Swami Rama was an inspired experimentalist. His whole life is an adventure in the art of *self-realisation*. For the most part it was an unconscious urge which he could neither have explained nor avoided. An early pre-cocity in intellectual and academic matters soon develops in another direction and a consuming passion for the joys of the life of the spirit announces itself in his unworldly or rather other-worldly career. His eyes glow with an uncanny splendour and his gaze is fixed on eternity. His mind is restless and his roving spirit is ever in quest of its own essence and sublimity. There is no greater and more difficult search than that directed toward finding oneself. For one who 'finds' himself has need of finding nothing else, because there is nothing else to be found. This Upanisadic teaching Swami Rama made his own and launched out in the endeavour to find his own universality with an ardour that is truly amazing. And he succeeded. His life-story is a romance of the workings of the spirit in its own peculiar ways. He realised in his own life the ineffable joy, the cosmic expansiveness and the transcendental:

infinity of his own self. He was a Jivan-Mukta.

3. Sawami Rama taught and practised Vedanta. His philosophy is an elaboration of the Advaita view in life and action. In common with Vedanta and other system, he, stresses the need of discipline of the body and mind and the regimentation of the affections. The body is a temple of the spirit and must be kept healthy and undefiled. At the same time it must not be looked upon as *belonging* to my self. It is an instrument in the hands of the Spirit; it is an heritage, a trust left to us by our fore-fathers. Lest the legacy should become a burden it must be dedicated to the service of Reality. This dedication can become possible only when we regard the body as not my essence or self but as a focus for the radiation of energy and effort. Every now and then when we can snatch a moment, says Swamiji, we must reflect deeply on the body and realise that I am not my legs, trunk, arms, face and head, and for the moment we shall lose all consciousness of these. The Buddhists similarly enjoin reflection on the worthlessness and even the rottenness of the body as a preparation for acquiring detachment. Like the 'suspension' of the body, we must 'suspend' the

mind and feelings too as the next step. This is the cultivation of *Vairaga*. The restless mind (which has been compared to a monkey in the *Yogavashista*) with its ever recurring desires must be controlled by concentration on these very fleeting desires by following them out in imagination with a view to seeing their illusory charm and their intrinsic contradictoriness. This is the first stage in the training and already it brings joy at the discovery of the unessential character of what is ordinarily regarded infinitely precious and real. And, with this realisation the bodily organism appears as a *focus imaginarius*; for this illusory focus has now become the focus of the Universe and the consciousness of cosmic expansiveness arises. Says Swamiji:

‘All ears, my ears; all eyes my eyes

All hands, my hands; all minds, my
mind.’

4. But even after intellectual conviction has been achieved there may be important obstacles in the way of self-realisation. For despite such conviction there may be now and again an unconscious re-assertion of old habit of thought (*Viparita-bhavana*). Vedanta here prescribes *Nididhyasana*: meditation on the identity bet-

ween the individual self and Brahman. This meditation eventually yields an immediate intuition (Aparoksa) of identity and when this is attained the individual becomes a Jivan mukta. The Jivan mukta's life has two phases: it is either *Samadhi* or mystic trance when he turns inwards, as it were, and loses himself in the Brahman; or acquires the condition known as *Vyuthhana* or reversion to common life when the spectacle of the world returns but does not delude him since he has realised its ultimate metaphysical falsity. A Jivan Mukta still experiences pain and pleasure but they do not really matter. Though he has his feet still on the earth, his moorings are in eternity. He has become Brahman itself and as the Isa Upanisad says, he sees all beings in himself and himself in all beings. Having transcended the life of strife he lives as the cosmos itself in ineffable joy. Says Swami Rama:

"I swallowed up Death, all differences I
drank up ;"

How sweet and strong a food I find:

No fear, no grief, no hankering pain;

All, all delight,.....

Such is the life of Jivan Mukta and when

at last he is dissociated from the physical accompaniments which appear to have confined him, he is not re-born for he has attained Brahman and acquired *Videh-mukti*. And, such *mukti* was Swami Rama's, a *mukti* which is not cessation or annihilation, but immortality and fulfilment in the truest and most literal sense.

5. We have above spoken of the 'attainment' of *moksa* or the 'becoming' of Brahman. This manner of expression is misleading. According to Sankar-Vedanta *moksa* is not a state to be newly attained, but is the very nature of the self: if *moksa* were not intrinsic to self it could never have been achieved, and even if it were, it would be external to it and would always be regarded as super-imposition or *adhyasa*. This would be contradictory, for the very effort of realisation is directed towards the removal of *adhyasa* or illegitimate transference or super-impositions. Hence the desire for *moksa* or realisation is not desire in the ordinary sense of the term; it is the essential nature of self to urge its own unfolding or realisation: *in suo esse perseverare*. The self realises what it always, intrinsically holds within itself, which it always is, though for the time being it may have

forgotten it (like the hunter who did not realise that he came of royal blood until he came to know of it). Why this forgetfulness, this *ajnana*? Because it is the way of life, of effort, of *maya*; *Maya*, however, is not an eternal principle coeval with *Brahman*. It is of the nature of darkness which yields to light and to the emancipated *maya* is naught, for it *really* never was, says Vedanta. Thus, the becoming and attainment are to be understood in a very peculiar sense. It is becoming what one always was, and attaining what one always had. That is what the Upanisad means when it says "*That thou art*"; it does not say '*That thou becomest*.' When once *jnana* arises, all *ajnana* is dispelled and the spirit rises in all its innate splendour which is *moksa* or realisation. The Vedanta emphasises that such *moksa* is fully within the grasp of all who may desire it and who are prepared to work for it. And, Swami Rama's life is a brilliant example of how a frail human being can achieve that greatness and perfection before which the immensity of this Universe is a mere shadow.



SWAMI RAMA AS HARBINGER OF COMMUNAL PEACE AND UNITY.

(By Syt. Beni Prasada Bhatnagar, M. A., L. T., F. T. S., Head
Master, Aminabad High School, Lucknow.)

There will hardly be an educated Indian who might not have heard the name of Swami Rama Tirtha. This Sun of righteousness having risen from the Land of the Five Rivers on the day following the Diwali and having shed his light both at home and abroad for full 33 years set in 1906 on the Diwali day. As the physical Sun has to struggle hard with dark clouds in shedding his light, so had this spiritual Sun also to struggle hard throughout his life, in order to shed his spiritual lustre far and wide.

Like Rama of Ajodhia, this Rama of Marali Wala has set an example in every sphere of human life.

1. To be deprived of the mother's caresses in infancy and then get nourishment.
2. To acquire high education in extreme poverty,
3. To carry out the orders of his guru without how and why,

4. To prefer the line of teachership to that of Indian Civil Service,

5. To go to the Himalayas for realization having given up his worldly position and possession, as well as his wife and children,

6. To become God by worshipping God, viz. realizing God everywhere and seeing every one as God.

7. To come back from the heights of the Himalayas as well as from that of the lofty thoughts of peace and bliss, in order to give them to those who are tired of the world, etc. etc. are some of the phases of his life that set examples for others.

But the greatest work that this hero has done is to heal the wounded hearts of the nations. The Hindus and Muhammadans being the children of the same soil were fighting tooth and nail with each other. At this crisis Swami Rama appeared on the stage and did his best to reconcile them by setting his own example and by his impartial and soul-inspiring teachings. One of them is his "*Akbar-i-dili*," an extract from which runs as under:—

"It is easy to say to show favour upon the followers of other religions and also to love

them who hate you and to eradicate personal enmity, in short to love all etc. etc., yet it is very hard to do so. Be it hard or harder, but without doing this, there can be no unity in nation, nor can there be union in country. It is *general* truth, but it has become *special* now-a-days for India, we do not ask you to bid good-bye to the religion in which you are born, but it is the sin of spiritual suicide, if you consider it sin to go beyond the boundry of the religion in which you are born. It is essential to be born and nourished within the four-walls of a religion; but it is sin to die therein."

The writer of the above lines had a peculiar effect upon the Hindus, the Mohammadans and the Christians, who getting rid of their religious differences, in his presence, were united with one another in love. He says that the apparent Hinduism, Muhammadanism, and Christianity etc. are like several cups through which attempts have been made to give some milk of Universal Love. By worshipping these cups, disunion increases. These cups are many and they serve us as idols. Blessed is he who realizes God through idols and gets Reality through formality, Doubly blessed is he from whose hands

this cup falleth down and is rendered into pieces on account of the extacy of the Self....." He again says "Love, that is specific character of humanity, should be entertained with every one, irrespective of his caste, creed and country, with the same zeal as the two members of a family feel. Endear even the mud of your country. If this world does not then beat down the Heavens, complain to me. Have you ever made an experiment of getting rid of all enmity from heart and malice from bosom. If you have made no such experiment, you have no right to refute it. The Yogic Scriptures state that when a person feels Universal Love (*Sam* or *ahimsa*) with vigour, the wild animals then give up their enmity. If the equation of *action* and *reaction* is correct, why should not then this be true.

Another poet has experienced these very thoughts stating that "As the Sun and the Moon glorify the firmament above or as the two eyes beautify the face of a sweet-heart, so do the Hindus and the Muhammadans grace India. The day will be blessed when the Muhammadans will be enamoured in love of Krishna and the Hindus will sing the praises of Muhammad."

Swami Rama does again say that "One, whose heart is narrow, *viz.* one, who is confined to the small circles of Hinduism, Muhammadanism or Christianity, can never be an *Akbar-i-dili*, or broad-minded. One who is *Akbar-i-dili* says as under:—

"Every life is My life, every heart is My heart, yes My light is in the eyes of the *bulbul* and the rose, as well as in those the Sun and of the Moon. It is My heart that is throbbing in the hearts of the Hindus, the Muhammadans, the Parsis the Sikhs, the Jains and the Christians."

It is regretted that even after living many a century in this country our learned Pandits on one hand and our educated Maulivis on the other have not yet realized that we the Hindus and the Muhammadans are the children of one and the same Mother India, as it is her milk, *viz.* her produce, that gives us nourishment. The Swami says "With love whose harsh words are even accepted Dear Muslims, why is this difference, your *head* is here and your *heart* there, and your life is somewhere else. You have been living in India for centuries, why then do you keep your *hearts* away from the Hindus.

Hindu Pandits, please recollect the anecdotes

of the Rama who has set an example to the world by His eating the remains of the plums that were eaten by Shivari, a *bhilani*; by His love to the poor sailor† and by His kindness to the brother‡ of the enemy. Forget the old complaints and forgive all wrongs of each other. Reconcile with those who have turned away their faces from you.

Let by-gone be gone.

“The stars are not separate from light,
So are we not separate from ye.”

O dear enemy: Say whatever you please-however harsh it may be; try your best to tease me. But if I do not make home in thy heart I am not Rama.”

Is there any prescription, better than this to cure the disease of the abuse of religion. Use it and it will make you all right. You will regain your spiritual strength and all domestic feud will come to an end love shall reign supreme to manifest the ever-lasting happiness and infinite progress both in the spiritual and the corporal realms.

† Nikhad.

‡ Bhabhishan.

SWAMI RAMA TIRTHA AS EXPONENT OF VEDANTA IN JAPAN AND AMERICA.

BY Dr. MAHESH CHARAN SINHA, M. Sc.

LIGHT OF VEDANT PERSONIFIED.

Swami Rama Tirtha was a living personification of Vedanta philosophy in India is admitted on all hands. In him, "I" and "you" were obliterated by practical realization of the oneness of God and His manifestation in the limitless variety of creation that we find all around us. He was the most successful and effective exponent of Vedanta.

Swami Rama Tirtha raised the philosophy of Vedanta to the highest pedestal in not only India itself, where it had become laughing stock of the cynic and the unthoughtful critics who could not tolerate the idea of identifying God with man in the lag end of the nineteenth century, but also in Japan and America.

His personal magnetism was so great that I saw with my own eyes these very cynics and the critics hold their breath in awe and wonder in presence of Swami Rama at the moment be-

hummed *Om, Om, Om* and poured forth his rhapsody,

‘Ham aur nahin tum aur nahin’

‘Ham sukhe chane chabain ge,
Bharat ka kam banain ge.”

PERSONAL DARSHAN.

About thirty years ago I heard a lecture in the Reid’s Christian College Lucknow, the opening words of which described above, still ring in my ears and bring before my mind’s eye the magnetic and dominating personality of the Swami whose looks and voice made mental reserve and brain resistance of the doubter impossible. The ecstasy and the living faith with which he recited the following couplet

“Man to shudam to man shudi

Man tan shudam to jan shudi

Ta kas na goid bad azani

Man digram to digri.”

was simply superb, which brought conviction and unfolded a new reality to many that had learnt the above mentioned couplet by heart before, but had never realised its meaning until they heard it from Swamiji.

To inspire conviction and convert without argument was his chief peculiarity. Gestures,

expressions, looks, witty remarks and suitable similies were enough to bring the questioner to his knees.

HIS WORK IN JAPAN,

Valuable was though his work in India but still more valuable was the work which he did in Japan, the land of charming flowers long flown kimonos, trimly decorated kankobas, devout bonsans and valiant samurais.

I reached Japan a little before the Great Sawami had left for America. But I was there at a time when the impressions left by the Swami were still fresh in the public mind of Japan and his disciple Puran was still there to propagate the Vedanta mission of the Swami.

WHAT THE JAPANESE WOMEN SAID ABOUT RAMA

I heard a group of women in Tokio saying that Rama Swami appeared to them as a most lovely and beautiful man, more beautiful than they themselves were. His sweet smiles and wonderful humming of 'Om' seems to have imparted fragrance to our flowers of the Hanayeki. The Point to be noted is that the Japanese flowers being odourless were imparted with fragrance and therefore one who could imbue them with smell must be supernatural and a

Divine man.

WHAT THE JAPANESE MEN SAID.

I heard the men saying that he was a living Buddha who once more showed his lustre like a shooting star. The Swami they said combined the Vedanta of India with Buddhism of Japan.

SOURCE OF PRIDE TO HINDU STUDENTS.

Though his stay was short in Japan yet he succeeded in creating a profound respect for the Hindu philosophy among the Japanese people, who till then had very poor idea about modern Hindu intellect.

The Indian students living in Japan were greatly helped by the atmosphere of love, goodwill, and self respect which Swami Rama's lectures had created. He proved that the ancestors of the Hindus and the Japanese were the same, and that the Lord Buddha was the common Guru of both. This made the Japanese treat Hindus like their own kith and kin and sweetened the life of Hindu students in the Japanese families to a remarkable degree. I have enjoyed many favours and much respect at the hands of the Japanese owing to Rama's mellowing influence and because I was coming from the land of Gautam Buddha, the Japanese Saka Sama

namely Shakyamuni.

WANTED MORE SWAMIS TO GO ABROAD.

How I wish such venerable Swami the only possible consuls of the Hindu culture and philosophy to go out in larger numbers to Japan over and over again to revive and enliven the old relationship between India and Japan relationship based on love, brotherhood and ideology which is certainly more enduring and reliable than the one based on the varying economic interest and changing political fraternities, like that of Philastine and Arabs.

SWAMI RAMA IN AMERICA.

The greatest work done by Rama was in America. Where he was at his best, it was so perhaps because our Eastern pearl was in the midst of expert jewellers who could appreciate him properly. The advanced people of America were the fittest people to recognise the true worth of the genius and unparalleled gem of India. I have never heard of any man's name being pronounced with greater respect and love than that of Swami Rama from the mouth of the most learned judges, acute scientists, famous scholars, expert financiers, and shrewd lawyers, including men and women alike.

AMERICANS WELCOME RAMA.

In Seattle and British Columbia I found men like Senator Edward Holton James, Mr. Wells, the emigration officer, Miss Ingles, the artist and a host of other people who talked highly of the greatest Hindu who ever came to America, a real savant and sage whose life mirrored the highest principles of Hindu spirituality.

RAMAS SOCIETY IN OREGON.

In Portland Oregon the city of roses I found scholars like Mr. Galvani, judges like Lionel Webster, consuls like judges O Denny, millionaires and financiers like Mr. Going of Stone Range and others who having come into direct contact with Swami Rama Tirtha, had formed Rama's Society to recollect and practise his teachings and help India in breaking caste. There were about 20 members of this Society in Portland. It was very pleasing and ennobling to see these members-accosting one another with the greetings of Om, Om and joining the palms of their hands in right Hindu style.

Some of the richest and most cultured ladies proudly narrated how the saintly Ram converted them to his faith and had given them the names of Sita, Savitri, Laxmi and Radha.

'LIVING CHRIST.

Misses Judge O, Denney the American consul of China speaking about Rama always said that he was "Living Christ" on earth, a true oriental saint who reflected the love of universe in himself.

He was loved and honoured wherever he went and his lectures were always inspiring and uplifting. His chant of Om vibrated with joy every fibre of some of the toughest unbelievers of religion and spirituality who had to admit that blissful peace illumined them in the presence of Rama. Some Said Rama gave the real bread of life in his lecture. Those who came in contact with him described him as gentle, pure, noble, earnest, unassuming, sweet, innocent child and the very bubbling spring of happiness; yet his thoughts were high and sublime which left deep impression on his audience.

HIS MESSAGE TO AMERICA.

He wanted the Americans to live on a higher spiritual plane. This was his message to America.

HIS ANXIETY FOR HINDU STUDENTS.

Turning to India he always appealed to the Americans to interest themselves in Hindu

students who may not only imitate American push and independence but with the air of American freedom break down caste system which is eating away the vitals of the race which gave the noble heritage of Vedanta to the world.

HIS THRUST AT CASTE SYSTEM

How deeply he felt the evil of caste system will appear from the following remarks:-

"All the conventions, traditions, customs, superstitions and religious make beliefs of India have become only dead symptoms of spritual ailment, due to the cramping of self into one set of living on the mental plane alone, which however beautiful to start with has already degenerated into a system of hypocritical assertion"

THE OBJECT OF RAMA'S SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

It was therefore the first rule of Rama Society in America to help only such Hindu students who would make it their mission to break caste on their return to India.

CASTE SYSTEM MUST GO.

If India is to live, caste system must be swept away, said he to Mr. Galvani the Russian savant who was the secretary of Rama Society of Port-

land Oregon one of the western most States of America.

He said that India was suffering from false appetite of spirituality, morality and mentality due to caste system, which should therefore be broken before the full plane of physical life can be opened for her vigorous growth.

WHERE ALL THE THREE SWAMIS AGREE.

It is significant to note that all the three great Swamis of modern India Swami Dyananda, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Rama Tirtha have with one voice denounced caste system and even the great living Mahatma Gandhi has joined in the chorus of condemnation. It is therefore surprising that the socialist political leaders of the day professing to follow the same Mahatma Gandhi venture to encourage and foster the creation of new castes or classes under new names with redoubled vigour twice replete with venom more fatal and destructive than that of the Brahminic caste system which keeps the Hindus in eternal bondage.

CASTES UNDER NEW GARB.

The diversion of Society into caste and sub-castes is being further sub-divided into Unions for weavers, carpenters, railwaymen, postal em-

ployees, paper workers, press workers, transport workers, shop assistants, and others which like the innumerable castes of old are narrowing their bonds and are sowing the seeds of disaffection, hatred and human antipathy towards each other.

THE GREAT NEED.

Universal love, realization of oneness with one another, practice of Vedanta as Swami Rama Tirtha taught, is the only remedy to counter act the chaotic sub-division of castes and classes which is running its dangerous course to the brink of utter destruction.

Let us therefore invoke the great spirit of Rama to bless us, to guide us and to make us love every human being as we would love our own limbs, our kith and kin and our own carnal self.

Om Shantil, Shantil. Shantil

SWAMI RAMA AS A PATRIOT OR NATIONALIST

by

P. Brij Nath Shargha, M. A.

Rama was a Sannyasi. A Sannyasi is one who renounces the world. Renunciation, to the man in the street, means snapping of all ties with the mundane world, and living in the other world. Patriotism in a Sannyasi is generally considered to be against his Dharma, for patriotism is nothing but attachment to one's native land and its people. A Sannyasi ought to have no attachment, especially to what is but mere mirage.

2. Yet Śwami Rama was a patriot. He took keen interest in the political affairs of his country. He was a thorough nationalist. He loved India passionately; he adored her. His devotion to India can better be expressed in his own words:

As a Shiva worships Shiva, a Vaishnava Vishnu, a Buddhist Buddha, a Christian Christ, a Muhammadan Mohammed with a heart turned into a "Burning Blush," I see and worship India in the form of a Shiva, Vaishnava, Buddhist, Christian, Muhammadan, Parsi,

Sikh, Sannyasi, Pariah or any of Her children. I adore Thee in all Thy manifestations, Mother India, my Gangaji, my Kali, my Isht Deva, my Saligram. While talking about worship, says the god who loved to eat the very clay of India:—The difficulty of those whose minds are set on the *unmanifested* is greater; for the Path of the *unmanifested* is hard for the embodied to reach." Well, all right, Sweet Krishna, let mine be the path of adoration of that *manifestation divine* of whom it is said—

"All His house-hold property consists of a jaded ox, one side of a broken bedstead, and old hatchet, ashes, snakes, and empty "skull." It is the Mahadeva of *Mahimnastorta*? No, I mean the living Narayana as the poor starving Hindustani, Hindu. This is my religion; and for an inhabitant of India, this should be the Dharma, Common Path, Practical Vedanta, or Divine Love. Mere luke warm approbation or toleration won't do." I want active co-operation from every child of India to spread this dynamic spirit of Nationality. A child can never reach youth except when he passes through boyhood. A person can never realise his unity with God;

the All, except when unity with the **WHOLE NATION** throbs in every fibre of his frame. Let every son of India stand for the service of the Whole, seeing that whole India is embodied in every son. Almost every town, stream, tree, stone, and animal is personified and sanctified in India. Is it not high time now to deify the entire Motherland and let every partial manifestation inspire us with devotion to the Whole? Through '*Prana Pratishtha*' Hindus endow with flesh and blood the effigy of Durga. Is it not worth while to call forth the inherent glory and evoke fire and life in the more real Durga of Mother India? Let us put our *hearts* together, the heads and hands will naturally unite.

"The man consists of his faith (Shraddha, Islam)," says the world's warrior-evangelist (Krishna), "that which one's faith is he is even that."

Let me feel I am India—the whole of India. The land of India is my own body. The Comorin is my feet, the Himalayas, my head. From my hair flows the Ganges, from my head come the Brahmaputra and the Indus. The Vindhyachals are girt round my loins. The

Coromandal is my right and the Malabar my left leg. I am the whole of India, and its East and West are my arms, and I spread them in a straight line to embrace humanity. I am universal in my love. Ah! such is the posture of my body. It is standing and gazing at infinite space; but my inner spirit is the Soul of all. When I walk, I feel it is India walking. When I speak, I feel it is India speaking. When I breathe, I feel it is India breathing. I am India, I am Shankara, I am Shiva. This is the highest realization of Patriotism, and this is Practical Vedanta."

Was this against Sannyas Dharma? Was it no more than attachment to what is but a dream.

3. The greatest expounder of Vedanta, Shri Shankaracharya, has sung the praises of Shiva, Vishnu and Shakti, which, to a Vedantin, are as unreal as India. Do these praises drag him down from the high pedestal of monism into the mire of duality? If not, then Rama's devotion to India does not drag him down.

4. Nationalism is not, as is commonly believed, the product of the West, unknown to Hinduism and alien to Vedanta. Nationalism

has two aspects—a negative and a positive one. In its negative aspect it divides the world into the “Mine” and “Not Mine,” concentrates on the former to the utter exclusion of the latter; all that tends to the growth of the “Mine” is right; all that tends to the growth of the “Not-Mine” is sinful. The “Not Mine” exists only for the “Mine.” This negative aspect of nationalism had its birth in the West. It finds expression in the plunder of the weak, revels in the blood of the innocent, invents machines of destruction and makes one human being hate another simply because they happen to be living in different parts of the world. This is nothing but selfishness writ large, the brute in man magnified thousands of times. The last feast of blood in Europe, the recent sacrifice of Abyssinia, the betrayal of Czechoslovakia, the bleeding unto death of Spain, are the ugly demonstrations of this negative nationalism of the West. It turns men into beasts. It places the law of jungle above the law of righteousness. This nationalism Hinduism does not favour, Vedanta does not foster.

Nationalism in its positive aspect unites the “I” with the “Not-I”. It leads to the expansion

of the self; it raises an individual above himself. The individual "I" exists only to be merged in the vaster "I" of the country; any thing that leads to the separation of the individual from the nation is a sin; all that leads to the realization that the individual is an inseparable part of the whole is right. This nationalism leads Godwards. It is inherent in Hinduism. It is a necessary stage on the road to the realization of that Ultimate Reality which is One without a second, underlying the multiplicity of manifestation, forming the enduring basis of fleeting phenomenon, a concept suggested to the Hindu mind by the vastness of India and the essential unity underlying the apparent diversity of her races, creeds and cultures.

5. As I have said elsewhere, "Nationalism is the feeling of deep love one has for what constitutes the nation, a feeling so intense that one is prepared to sacrifice one's all, life, liberty, and property, for the nation. This feeling expands the individual self so as to include the indefinable and almost limitless Self, the Nation. It raises a man above himself, brings him nearer the Atma. Such a feeling Hinduism and Vedanta could not but

foster."

6. For the growth of this feeling, the realization of the geographical and political unity of the country is essential. The existence of this factor in the case of India is admitted even by English writers. Monier Williams says, "India, though it has, as we have seen, more than five hundred dialects, has only one sacred literature accepted and revered by all adherents of Hinduism alike, however diverse in race, dialect, rank and creed.....the only quarry whence the requisite material can be obtained for improving the vernaculars or for expressing important religious and scientific ideas." According to Sir Herbert Risley, "Beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom and religion which strikes the observer in India there can still be discerned, as Mr. Yusuf Ali has pointed out, a certain underlying uniformity of life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin." Vincent Smith finds that Indian civilization "has many features which differentiate it from that of all other regions of the world, while they are common to the whole country or rather continent in a degree sufficient to justify its treatment as a unit in the history

of human social and intellectual development."

The German historian, Hans Kohu, has realised that for many thousands of years India has been one, not merely in a geographical sense but in religion, civilization, and customs. He finds that "In a common intellectual heritage, persisting through an unbroken tradition and moulding and permeating India's whole social life to the minutest detail, and in the peculiar contemplative piety which lies at the root of all the various forms of Hinduism, India has always been conscious of her oneness."

7. To a Hindu, India is an 'expression of Reality—a mighty Goddess of protection and plenty, to whom prayers are offered by the Vedas and the Purans. "Even the Devas sing the song," says the Vishnu Puran "that blessed are those who forsake divinity to be born again as men in the sacred land of India which is the giver not only of Paradise but also of Salvation."

Nationalism is not thus alien to Hinduism; it is purified into religion; it is elevated into Vedanta. This is the clue to Swami Rama's nationalism.

8. The hunting hounds of British Imperialism in India were let loose in 1913 on the manuscript of Swami Rama; they took away all that dealt with Indian political problems and their solutions in the light of Vedanta. We have now to gather his political views from stray references in his other writings.

The abject poverty of India lacerates Rama's tender heart, and he cries :—

“The Garden of India, if it is robbed, it is because the barbed fence or thorny hedges were wanting. Put in the prickly thickets all around. Be not rash enough to pull out the roses and fruit trees in the centre, in the name of redressing the wrongs. The intellectual wealth of India is welcome every way.

“She (India) who has held open port to all fugitives (Parsees, Jews, Muslims) is unable now to give bread to her own children.

“She, with whom Parsees, Jews and Christians have been thankful to take refuge, is despised and ostracised by all three alike.”

9. Rama, the man of action that he was, was not satisfied with the idle talk, the politician of his day indulged in. He writes about the Congress, “Timid, prudent, National Congress

people! the cruel death of one of the speakers in the name of nationality can do far more to unite the nation than thousands of lectures by all the members put together". "National Union in India, as in any other country, is impossible except after hundreds, nay, thousands of innocent, pure natives are mercilessly sacrificed, hanged and bled in the name of truthful outspokenness. Union, Union. Everybody feels the need of union. Myriads of forces are neutralising each other. No *resultant* force. Hundreds of millions of brains and hands drifting, drifting, who can tell whither? Thousands of sects and classes each trying to row the boat in the pet direction of its own sweet whim. No regular steering! Let the oars be where they are. Keep your position, shift not, but row in one direction. Such harmony, unity in diversity, ensures progress. Thus working at your post, sing on and move on. The national interest demands that, and in the interest of the whole lies the interest of each unit".

10. To the Indian politicians he said, "Politicians of India, you have been trying the methods of protesting, criticism and heart

burning complaint, but things have been taking the worse turn every day. Let us try now the right way. If the other party did wrong, doing wrong in return will only add another black to the previous black but will not make it white." An elderly gentleman was about to spank a boy for showing him disrespect, saying, "Fool, why did you misbehave?" The boy replied, "Sir, I was naughty because as you say I was a 'fool.' Now you are so wise, behave as is worthy of you." When an electrically charged body comes not in contact but only in proximity with another body, the result in the second body is what they call a charge by induction, that is to say, quite the opposite kind of electricity is generated. It is the actual contact that brings about a kindred charge. So when you want to settle matter through reasoning and logic, while the glass partitions of caste-feeling and race-feeling do not let the hearts unite, you come in dangerous proximity. The result produced is quite the opposite of what you desire to effect. You cannot know a man unless you first love him."

11. He advises budding patriots in the following words, "Tune yourself in love with your

country and the people. Feel your unity with them. Let not even the shadow of your present personality be the thin glass partition between you and your people. Be a genuine spiritual soldier laying down your personal life in the interest of the land. Abnegating the little ego, and having thus become the whole of the country, feel anything, your country will feel with you. March, your country will follow. Feel health, your people will be healthy, your strength will begin to pulsate in their nerves."

12. He did not subscribe to the view that if each man sought his own salvation, Society would automatically be redeemed. He said, "To work out your own salvation and let society alone, oh! if only it were possible, a drowning society cannot let you alone. You must sink with her, if she sinks, and rise with her, if she rises. It is an utter absurdity to believe that an individual can be perfect in an imperfect society. The hand might just as well cut itself from the body and acquire perfection of strength.

"Long has this unvedantic thought been cherished in India, entailing pitiable dismemberment of the future and you are respon-

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sible for it. Cowards are governed by the superstitions of the magic majority. The genuine living soul governs the hearts and thoughts of the people, let the nominal outward Ruler be he who may be."

13. The conflict of creeds that divides India he deplored thus:—

"Oh! What an infinite amount of energy in the land is just recklessly wasted away in one sect criticising another sect! Let us try to find out the points of contact and emphasize those between us. There are people whom the Arya Samaj can reach and Sanatana Dharma cannot; there are others to whom the Brahmo Samaj only appeals, and so with Vaishnavism, etc. What right have I to find fault with those who do not care for the strength and joy which my creed brings?"

"Let them come, let them stay or leave. I let things flow, just flow. Why should you or I try to monopolise sympathizers? My right is only to serve, to serve them all, to serve those who love and those who hate (if any). A mother loves those children the most who are the weakest and play the mean. Those who differ from you, are they all wrong? If so, they also

are needed by the country. Sad, indeed, would be the state of a walker who had only the right leg to hop along with. True education means learning to look at things through the eyes of God."

14. He made a fervent appeal to Americans on behalf of his country and personally presented a copy of it to the President of that Great Republic when he went to see Swami Rama. In the course of his appeal he says, "Rama will not dwell long upon the horrible political plight of the benighted land. In a country where millions of men are dying of famine, where hunger and starvation are harvesting the green, fresh girls and boys, where poverty and plague are nipping in the bud promising youths, where the tender, tiny baby cries with dry, pouting lips because the famishing mother has no milk to nurse it, in a country where there is hardly a man who can make the two ends meet, where a person living from hand to mouth is thought to be very well off, where the Rajas and Princes are not unoften involved in sad pecuniary troubles; in a country, which is loyal, patient and faithful, no matter what its grievances and sufferings, in such a country

of appalling poverty, the gracious Government, in addition to the impoverishing taxes, thinks it indispensably necessary to squeeze out and wring out millions of dollars from the curdled blood and parched skin of the gasping labourers, simply to glorify and aggrandize a mere name and form, to fetishize a suit of clothes, to idolize a lump of flesh....In addition to this grand or awful fun and show, a thousand lesser forms of extravagant tomfoolery are draining the country and sucking the sap and life-blood out of it. All the high lucrative offices are in the exclusive possession of the British. Out of the teeming three hundred millions of people there is not a single representative in the House of Parliament. All native enterprise is handicapped by the British. Foreign nations are feeding fat on the cream of Indian produce. To the share of the poor Hindu falls dry husks and dirty water, and very often even that is denied. All native arts, industries and manufactures have decayed. The only liberty that the people can enjoy, or, rather, the only illusory liberty that consumes and enjoys their health, wealth and morality, is the demoniacal spirit of false

freedom, borrowed from strong English wines and ruining British liquors, the use of which is highly encouraged among the naturally sober natives of India. These wines have been introduced by the English. This gives you an idea of the political predicament of India. This tells you something of their outward condition."

15. He asks America, "to send Americans, right earnest Americans, the martyrs to Truth, to India, Do not send to us the refuse of America. Do not foist on India the people who cannot get any job in America. Send to India the cream of society, the cream of America, that is what is needed there. We want there people who will go and work among the Pariahs, the lowest caste—ungrateful labour. These Shudras will not reward you; they will not even be thankful for your work because these people are very poor, illiterate, ignorant; they will not even give you clothing and food in reward for what you do for them. Why? Because they themselves have no food and clothing. Needed are men who will go and work among these people, who will starve themselves and help these poor men. Will

not men from America take up this work? They must come from noble America, from sacrificing America. Rama expects to get a good lot of people, a happy band of men; who will take up this work. Rama wants not missionaries of the type who go to India, live in rich bungalows and lord it over the people, who keep lolling in carriage and two, and rolling in worldly honour and plenty. These people cannot effect the salvation or the rise of India. We want martyrs in the name of Truth; real workers, sacrificing men who will be willing and ready to lie down with the Pariahs upon the floor and who are content to be clothed in rags with them, who are content to starve with them, who are content to share with them the tough and hard crusts or half-cooked bread. People of that type we want, who can forego their sensuous comforts and love to renounce selfish pleasure.

"There is a more immediate way. O! Americans, could you not raise, in the name of truth and justice, in the name of religion and philosophy, in the name of science and art, could you not raise enough money to call some graduates of Indian Universities to come over

to America, and here to receive education in your industrial, mechanical and other useful concerns, in your Colleges of Arts, in your armouries and other places; educate them and teach them weaving and mining and other useful arts. This is the most direct way of elevating India. Raise funds here and bring the Indians to this country. Those Indians who receive education in America could return to India and start Industrial Universities. They know the ways of the poorer classes; they know the language, habits and customs of the Indians; and they can do better work among the Indians as Professors than your Americans can. American Professors can only teach the higher castes, they can only teach the rich men who know English already, the poorer classes do not know English. In order to teach the poor we require people who know their language and their ways. This is the most efficient way and the right method to uplift Indians.

"Indians, when they step upon the free American coast and find white ladies and gentlemen ready to warmly shake hands with them and receive them as equals, their

fears are fled, the white man remains no longer a bugbear, faith in self is restored, the veil of Maya is rent and the spirit of freedom is practically secured. Let the Indian graduates trained in America, return as missionaries of work and freedom in their motherland. Let the Gospel of Science and Art be preached by them in India. Let the people of India be helped to spread practical Vedanta in their own country. This way when the wound gets healed, the scab will fall off of itself. When the people get the right kind of education, the other difficulties will disappear of themselves. If you could bring some Indian graduates over here and educate them and instruct them for two or three years, suppose these people on their return to India can immediately start work, can start business or work useful for themselves as well as for the poorest classes.

"Even one capitalist of America could take up this noble work, could stand up and say that he is going to lay out, say \$ 1,000,000 to educate the graduates of Indian Universities in America; if one of you today take up that task and take up that work and deposit even \$ 100,000, we can establish respectable

scholarships for poor Indians to be educated in America. Rama appeals to the American press, Rama appeals to each and all of the Americans. If any one of you can step forward and take up this duty, you are helping the cause of the whole world”.

16. Rama realised that India was passing through critical times; and to his dejected countrymen he said, “If we are born in critical times of Indian History, let us be thankful, for our opportunities for service are more abundant. The work for us is more unique, more poetic and dynamic. It is said they who sleep well wake well. India has had a long sleep, her wakefulness is going to be most remarkable for that. All that we have to arouse among the Indian people is a spirit of appreciation and not criticism, the sentiment of fraternity, the instinct of synthesis, the co-ordination of functions and aristocracy of labour.

“The future of India...promises to be hopeful and bright. Everything in this world “moves rhythmically,” and the law of periodicity governs all phenomena. In accord with this law should move even the sun or star of prosperity. There was a time when the sun of

wisdom and wealth shone at the zenith of glory in India. As seen through the eyes of History the luminary, like other heavenly bodies, began gradually to march westward. It passed over Persia, Assyria and further west. Egypt saw it shining overhead. Next came the turn of Greece. After that Rome enjoyed the noon of glory. Then Germany, France, and Spain were duly waked up by the Light.

"At last England began to receive the dazzling Splendour of the Sun of prosperity. Westward, ho ! travels the Sun and brings America to the high swing of Fortune. In the United States the Light spread in the usual course, travelling from New York (or "the East") westward and westward till it reached California (or "the West") When it was day in India, nobody knew America. Now that it is day in America, the night of poverty and pain is hovering over India. But, no the Sun seems already crossing over the Pacific Ocean and Japan bids fair to be among the foremost powers of the world, and, if the Laws of Nature are to be trusted, the Sun of wealth and wisdom must complete his Revolution and shine once more on India with redoubled

splendour, Amen!"

17. He fervently appealed to them, "Indians you perform *shardha* (offering to the dead) to bring bliss to your deceased mothers. Sacrifice your self-interest to redeem Mother India.

"Our personal and local Dharma must never be placed higher than the national Dharma. The keeping of right proportions only secures felicity.

Doing anything to promote the well-being of the nation is serving the Cosmic Powers Devas or gods. This kind of sacrifice or Yajna, is to be offered to the deity, India. It is to this kind of Yajna that the following verse of the Gita applies in these days:—

यज्ञं शिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्व किल विपैः ।

भुञ्जते ते त्वर्धं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥

The righteous, who eat only the remains of the sacrifice, are freed from all sins; but the impious, who dress food for their own sake, they verily eat sin.

"To realize God, have Sannyasa spirit, i. e., entire renunciation of self-interest making the little self absolutely at one with the great Self of Mother India. To realize God or Bliss have the Brahmana Spirit, dedicating your

intellect to thoughts for the advancement of the nation. To realize Bliss, you have to possess the Kashatriya spirit, readiness to lay down your life for the country at every second. To realize God, you must have the true Vaishya spirit, holding your property only in trust for the nation. But to realize Bliss and Rama, in That world or This, and to give a living concrete objective reality to your abstract subjective Spirit, Dharma, you have to work this Sannyasa, Brahmana, Kashatriya and Vaishya heroism through your hands and feet in the manual labour once relegated to the holy Shudras. The Sannyas spirit must be wedded to the Pariah hands. This is the only way to-day wake up! wake up."

"Even the foreign countries, through their practice, teach to-day this Dharma to our India, the only Brahmana land in the world.

"When a Japanese youth is refused enlistment in the army on the ground of his obligations to his mother (domestic Dharma) the mother commits suicide, sacrificing the lower (domestic) Dharma for the higher (national).

"What heroic deeds could compare with the sacrifice of personal, domestic, and social Dharma for the sake of the national Dharma or

the part of that Ideal Guru of Glory (Gobind Singh) ?

"People hanker after power. What an infinite power can you not find at your command when your self stands in unity with the Self of the whole nation. In conclusion, let me illustrate this spirit in the beautiful words of prophet of Islam:—

"If the Sun stand on my right hand and the Moon on my left ordering me to turn back I would not obey."

"OM OM"



SWAMI RAM AS A BEACON LIGHT TO THE SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH.

By

(Sjt. SRI RAM B.A.,LL.B.)

Sri Swami Ram Tirathaji Maharaj was born in the year 1873 in a village in the Punjab in the family of Goshain Brahmans.

From his early childhood he displayed a spirit of immense self-sacrifice and devotion to duty. As a student he was brilliant but this brilliance was not divorced from diligence as is the case with many students. His career as a student affords numerous instances of his foregoing his meals once a day to provide books and examination fees for his fellow students of scanty means. As a religious disciple, single-minded devotion to austerities at the command of his Guru, unmindful of the world all round is illustrated in his life vividly. But this is not the only lesson that he imports by his life to the seekers after Godhood. All this does make one's life immensely superior and enviable and yet this is not what makes Swami Rama stand out in marked contrast

to so many others that have treaded his path so far. His life has imparted one outstanding lesson as yet unsurpassed, to the seekers after Truth, which is to be deduced from his short but weighty sentence "*Takht ya takhta*". (Throne or death) uttered at a time, when, leaving all the penances and austerities, the teacher and the teachings, in fact every blessed external aid to the attainment of Godhood, he sat in a corner throwing himself entirely at the mercy of God with heart, mind, senses and every thing else in him rivetted towards Him and Him alone as his only aid and inspiration. And it was then and not during the course of penances and austerities that Truth dawned on him. This is the one lesson the unrivalled message of his life that serves as Beacon Light in the path of seekers after Truth. His life proclaims in unmistakable and unambiguous terms that neither learning nor penances, neither discipline nor sacrifice but single-minded devotion and absolute surrender to God alone brings salvation. This lesson is taught in so many words by many teachers but mere teaching is one thing and incorporation of the same in every-day life, another. This latter however is

what really counts in this hesitant world full of doubting persons. This is then what makes his life of immense importance to seekers after Truth and unravels the Great Mystery; the secret of success of the Mahatmas.



SWAMI RAMA AN IDEAL STUDENT AND LOVER OF MATHEMATICS.

By

Sjt. NARAYANA SWAROOP, B. A., L. T. SECOND MASTER,
AMINABAD HIGH SCHOOL, LUCKNOW;

1. BIRTH AND EARLY AGE.

Born in the family of Gosain Brahmans, and true to his noble birth and high lineage of Rishi Vasisbtha he showed early signs of a sage having taken incarnation for the uplift of mankind.

The recitations from the Puranas, the Mahabarat and the Bhagāwt, which he used to hear in temples and shrines visited by him in company with his aunt, had a strange charm and fascination for the child Rama, so much so that he would even forego his meals to attend the 'Kathas' (the sacred stories). At his leisure, he dwelt over the stories heard with a contemplative and critical mind putting questions and offering explanations showing an extraordinary intelligence and a reverencial and devotional attitude for the Divine.

At an early age he astonished his Head

Maulvi of the village school with his splendid memory and acute intelligence. He had in his 5th class finished the Persian books, Gulistan and Bostan, and memorised a number of Urdu poems.

2 COLLEGE LIFE.

At fourteen he had passed the Entrance Examination from the Punjab University standing First in his school and gaining a scholarship. His father had married him early when he was too young to make any protests and did not want him to study further. But he had a burning desire for knowledge for knowledge sake and had a strong determination and devotion for studies overcoming every obstacle in his way. So he joined the College quite against his father's will and had to subsist on the small sum of scholarship received by him from the Municipal Committee. He stood First in F. A., and secured the Government scholarship notwithstanding his continued illness. With perfect faith in God and Guru he continued his studies in B. A. in the same College with Sanskrit as his second language against Peraian studied by him upto F. A. and maintained himself on the meagre scholarship without the help of his

father who wanted him to undertake any service.

3. DIFFICULTIES AND TRIALS.

On this his father felt very angry and left Rama's wife with him without giving any support whatsoever. Rama had now to face a number of difficulties, the house rent, the cost of books, the college fees, the necessary expenses of his wife and himself but with an undaunted courage and a supreme love of knowledge he surmounted all his difficulties. Although he had to forego even his meals for days together, yet he showed no signs of sorrow or suffering but bore all the hardships with a peaceful mind and a cheerful countenance. With an iron will, a grim determination and a supreme passion for knowledge, he continued study but still greater trials awaited to test his strength of purpose.

4. HIS GREAT FAILURE.

The year in which Rama appeared for his B.A., there was a confusion in the examination of English papers, so that some of the best boys failed, while the one who came out First was not going to be sent up at all by the Principal. By the irony of fate poor Rama was, also one of those who failed and he failed by only 3

marks in English although in the aggregate he was First in the whole University. A great agitation and discussion in papers led to the passing of a new Rule in the University later on but nothing could be done for Rama. Rama had, therefore, to submit to his hard lot not only to continue his studies for one year more in B. A. but without scholarship which was also stopped owing to failure.

5. THE SORE TRIAL.

This was indeed a moment of sore trial and any other heart but that of Rama would have broken under the great pressure of sorrow and suffering ending perhaps in a suicide as is the case with many a promising youth under similar circumstances of unsurmountable difficulties. And yet, notwithstanding the gloom all around, the gleam of perfect trust in God and Guru never forsook him for a moment and his courage never failed him. With tears in his eyes, he prayed to God in solitude and made a total surrender of himself to His great will and his prayer was heard. The next day when he joined the B. A. class again, he was surprised to find the college Sweet-seller requesting him to dine thereafter daily at his house. This

timely offer and invitation was very gratefully accepted by him and he was provided with clothes and money from time to time by his *mausa* Dr. Raghunath Mal.

He undertook some private tuitions also, at the same time giving free instructions to some in his hard pressed time, for he took a great delight in teaching. Thus he toiled on and the Professor of Mathematics was so pleased with his industry and intelligence that he helped him with his University fee also. True it is that God helps those who help themselves. He worked on without losing zeal or fervour.

G. B. A. EXAMINATION AND RESULT,

In his B. A. Test examination, he gained 145 marks out of 150 in Mathematics and in the University examination in B. A. Mathematics paper he had a choice of doing any 9 questions out of 13, but he solved all the thirteen and requested the examiner to select any nine although the paper was a stiff one and other students could do only 3 or 4 questions at their best. The result was that he stood First in the B. A. examination in the Punjab University and in First Division securing two scholar;

ships amounting to Rs. 60/- and a gold medal, a gown and other rewards.

7. THE LESSON.

The great lesson which we learn from his student life is that there is no difficulty which cannot be solved, no obstacle that cannot be surmounted, no failure that cannot be made a stepping stone to success, that even the greatest poverty is no bar to the achievement of proficiency and perfection. What is required is *unflinching determination and strength of will*, with *perseverant action, peace of mind and perfect self-surrender and trust in God*. Simple living and high thinking should be a maxim carried out in actual practice.

8. M. A. STUDIES,

While studying for his M. A. in Mathematics, he also acted for a couple of years as an honorary professor of Mathematics in the College where he had himself studied as he thought it his duty to discharge the debt owed to his Alma Mater. He used to teach his class-fellows with so much pleasure that he used to leave off his own work atonce, however important or busily engaged, if any one of them asked him a question.

9. EXERCISE

He was an early riser and regular in his daily bath. He was very fond of milk which suited him best. But up to his B. A., being over studious, he was very weak in health, suffering often from fever, headache and constipation. He now realised his mistake and the value of open air exercise and light but nourishing food well digested. So he took to regular exercise and long walks in the morning which greatly improved his health and vigour of mind and body.

10. M. A. RESULT.

When about 20 years old, he obtained the M. A. degree in Mathematics with a very high percentage of marks and he once thought of taking the State scholarship to go to Cambridge for the Blue Ribbon as it was his right that year. But he was destined to be a greater man in another line than a mere Senior Wrangler and the scholarship was given to a young Muhammadan.

11. LOVE FOR MATHEMATICS.

He opened private classes in Mathematics for coaching F. A. and B. A. students and one or two professors of the College also came to

study with him.

Such was his ardent love for Mathematics and such a zeal for solving problems that once when faced with some difficult problems, he could not do, he vowed to solve all of them the same night or to cut his throat before dawn. And before his fully concentrated mind all the problems gave way, one by one, except one the most difficult of them which in spite of his great attempt remained unsolved and the day was going to break. In his great disappointment he made a last frantic effort in vain and he actually took up the sharp knife to end his life, when all of a sudden the solution flashed before his eyes in a glorious halo of brilliant light.

To succeed or to die was the motto with him which made him invincible in all his undertakings and took him to the pinnacle of the sublime height of Spiritual Realization also,

For the benefit of the Student Community Rama delivered his first speech in English on Mathematics which later on appeared in the printed form of a pamphlet called "How to excel in Mathematics"

12. MEMORY AND LEARNING.

He had such a splendid memory that he

amazed his students by multiplying mentally, sums reaching to millions. He was a keen student of Mathematics and Science but no less of Philosophy and Literature. He studied a whole library of books on religion and philosophy of the East as well as of the West. He was perfectly at home in Persian, and Sanskrit, Urdu and Hindi and was quite conversant with the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Vedanta. He was rather a prodigy of learning and had utilised every minute of the short span of 33 years of his life.

13. SELF REALIZATION

Above all, his utter selflessness and sincere sympathy for all living beings, his complete self-surrender and devotion to God had made it possible for him to attain to that fearless and blissful state of mind in Self-realization in *Oneness*, where is no more delusion of duality and knowing which nothing remains to know.

14. THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

In his own words, the Secret of Success is seeking not our own aggrandisement but the glory of God to make our whole life a continuous prayer by our daily acts, for genuine work is its own reward and work is life.

15. THE MEASURE OF LIFE.

"We live in deeds, not days;
In thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial,
He lives most, who thinks most,
Feels the noblest, acts the best."



SWAMI RAMA AS AN ADVOCATE OF THE SADHARANA DHARMA.

BY Sjt. S. L. PANDE SHANTI PRAKASH.

As this aspect of Swami Rama's life has yet been very little mentioned by his biographers, so this writer (Prakash) has taken liberty to shed some light on it, as he has come in contact with this epoch-making hero through this aspect of his life. In doing so he will do his best to quote the hero and his biographers as far as possible,

2. To celebrate his 65th birthday anniversary, we have assembled here today in the R.T.P. League, the first quinquennial report of which states that "Shriwan Swami Shivananda Ji Maharaj published all the Urdu writings and lectures of this great saint in his paper 'The Sat Updesh', the then organ of the Shanti Ashram of the Sadharana Dharma Movement."

3. On January 9th, 1900, the Sadharana Dharma Sabha, Fyzabad, was established by His Holiness Swami Shivagunacharya, who, in this present age revived the Sadharana Dharma on March 1st, 1897, corresponding to Shivaratri of Samvat 1953, at the instance of his Guru,

His Holiness Swami Shivagiri Ji Maharaj, Yogiraj of Kunjah, District Gujrat in the Punjab. The writer has been associated with the Sabha since its inception, so he learnt from the then organ of the Sadharana Dharma Movement, that Goswami Tirtha Ram was canonized as the *Vyas* of the age, on July 12, 1900, on the occasion of the *Vyas Puja* fair held by the above mentioned Swami Shivaguna at Lahore.

4. *Vyas* is a degree that was in ancient times conferred upon the person who realised religion best and propagated it most. Swami Shivaguna seeing the hidden virtues in the Goswami and considering him fit to ameliorate the deplorable condition of the country, proposed him to be the *Vyas* of the age. The representatives of several religions, who were present there at the Common Platform of the Sadharana Dharma Movement, supported the proposal of the Swami; thus the Goswami was unanimously accepted and declared as the *Vyas* of the age. After accepting this spiritual leadership, he delivered two sermons, one in the morning and the other in the evening, to the effect (i) that the country should now no more be sad as her good days have now come; and (ii) that religion

should be studied by observation and experiment, as we study chemistry." Just after this *vis.* on July 14th, 1900, he sent his resignation from his service in the Oriental College Lahore, where he was working for two hours only, and on the next day he left Lahore for Haridwar and Rishikesh in order to lead a retired life of *tapas* or austerity; because no great work can be successfully performed without passing through such a life, to lead which he was very anxious. His wife and children as well as the late lamented Sriman Narayana Swami, then known as Narayana Das, Swami Ramanand, then known as Tula Rama, and several others including Swami Shivaguna Ji accompanied the Goswami. But Sriman Swami Shivagun soon returned to the plains in order to propagate the Sadharana Dharma and he established a Shanti Ashram at Muttra, the birthplace of Lord Krishna, on the bank of the Jumuna. He wrote him letters after letters to return to the plains and to work with him. Swami Rama replied him in a long letter ".....in order that I may be able to inspire working power or energy into our countrymen I must start with a vast store of accumulated energy myself; let

the time come, you shall most certainly be with me." At last the time came and it came soon as Swami Rama came to the Ashram in Dec. 1901 to act there as the Moderator-in-chief in the Dharma Mahotsava or the Parliament of religions where the representatives of almost all the religions expressed their views from the *common platform* of the Ashram. The personality of Swami Rama in the Mahotsava has been described by the *The Free Thinker*, a paper of Lahore, thus:—

"Of Swami Ram Tirtha M.A., who was life and soul of the last convention, the writer's vocabulary is too poor to enable him to speak in appropriate terms. As the Moderator-in-chief he had ample time at the close of each sitting to sum up the days proceedings and give expression to his own thoughts; and when he spoke he was always at his best every man's man, thoughtful and serious, lively and severe by turns, keeping the whole audience, composed of heterogenous shades of opinion, spell-bound, as it were, for hours together until late in the evening, when he announced among the ringing of hearty applause, that the day's meeting was closed. He is a quiet, modest and un-assuming

young man in the heyday of youth, well versed in ancient and modern philosophy, as well as in formal sciences, and is withal made of a stuff of which persons of honest convictions ought to be made. Gentle and amiable, childlike, innocent in manners and behaviour, he yet has the iron hand inside the silken glove, for while scrupulously regardful of the feelings of others, he is far more out-spoken in expressing his opinion than reckless, wayward self-assumed custodian of "divine will". It is hoped that this lover of truth and liberalism will never have cause to repent the course of life he has adopted, nor find reason to regret his identification with the cause of Dharma Mahotsava, whose interest, as a learned Sanyasin, he is most admirably suited to serve".

5. It will not be out of place to mention it here that the Acharya of this Ashram went to Bombay to receive Swami Rama on his return from the foreign countries and brought him there with him. To this Ashram Swami Rama sent Mrs. Wellmann alias Swami Suryananda from America. She stayed there in the Ashram for about a year and edited a paper called *The Practical Wisdom* therefrom. It pub-

lished all about Swami Rama's mission both at home and abroad as well as many of his lectures and writings therein.

6. Soon after the Dharma Mahotsava of the Shanti Ashram *viz.* in February, 1902 Swami Rama condescended to grace the Sadharana Dharma Sabha of Fyzabad near Ajodhia with his presence, at its second anniversary. How was the Swami invited there and how did he grace the meeting is a great mystery, the recollection of which does still fill the heart of Prakash with Divine Light.

This Sabha also had a *Common Platform*, upon which the representatives of several religions expressed their views. Swami Rama was the hero of this platform also. Maulvi Muhammad Murtaza Ali Khan who represented Muhammadanism from the platform was so much affected by Swami Rama's company or Sat-sang that he had to give up his service and to follow him, though at first he came to pick up a quarrel with him. When he learnt that Swami Rama was going to Japan, he went up to Calcutta to accompany him to the "Land of the rising sun", but as the Swami had already left the Indian shores, he had to come back and to

wait till his return from America. The writer has no words at his disposal to express his joy and happiness he felt in the company of this great soul Swami Rama. What to speak of an individual being, the whole of Fyzabad was blest with his soul-inspiring teachings. Those who were so inspired realised that Rama has come back to Ayodya once more.

7. Before Prakash proceeds further, he thinks it proper to explain what Sadharana Dharma is, as it is mis-interpreted by many to be a religion, like so many religions seen spread like mushrooms in the world. But such is not the case here. It is *the* religion that underlies all the religions, that exist at present or have existed in the past, or shall, in future, come into existence, as a string is behind the row of Jewels. (सूत्रे मणि गण इव) Whenever and wherever the Dharma or religion subsides, then in accordance with the Divine Law or the Law of Nature, such circumstances come into existence as revive it; and the person or persons who revive it are called by the names of the Rishis the Munis the Gurus, the Acharyas, the Mahatmas, the Budhas the Messiahs, the Tirthankaras, the Antars, the

Valls, the Pirs, the Prophets, the Leaders, the Reformers and the like, in accordance with the respective parts they play in this world, to revive this eternal and everlasting religion. The external circumstances that revive this real religion are taken by the masses to be the different religions and they fall in with each other for their respective religions. These religions sooner or later give way for others; but the Sadharana Dharma remains always the same and unaltered. This is the view of Swami Shivagunacharya.

8. Shriman Shanti Baba established his Shanti Math with similar aims and objects. He who afterwards amalgamated his Math with the Sadharana Dharma Movement, calls it "*the religion of physical, mental and spiritual peace.*" The glimpses of the Sadharana Dharma are seen in every sacred Scripture of the world, be it the Veda or the Purana, the Bible or the Quran, or any other holy scripture if we go through it minutely.

9. Mann the first legislator of the world has defined the Sadharana Dharma as the *dharma* or duty of all the four *Varnas*. It shall also be noted here that the legislator has not confined

the four varnas into the Hindu society alone. His statement that Sadharana Dharma is for all the four varnas means that it is for the human society which has been divided into four varnas. Thus the Sadharana Dharma is the religion of humanity. According to the legislator the *Varna* is a natural division of labour for different works in human society.

10. Why natural; because different persons have different innate tendencies for different works. If a person takes up the work in hand for which he has a natural inclination, he is sure to cut a good figure in the world by being expert and specialist in that work. On this basis Varna or caste system was introduced, but it has now degenerated into caste prejudice by being confined to the heredity as well as to the profession to follow which one is forced. We see every day that a boy who has an inclination to be a physician is forced to be a lawyer and vice versa, with the result that he does not prosper in his profession. Again every educated person in India aspires to be Government servant, with the result that we have at present to face the problem of non-employment, because it is an open secret that no Government can

secure service for every one. This problem will be solved if every one takes to the profession in accordance with the natural tendencies of his mind for them. Thus the individual as well as the nation and the country to which he belongs will prosper by leaps and bounds. But how to find out the natural tendency of a child is another question to be solved. The Kindergarten system of the West has solved this problem to some extent. If the horoscope system of the Hindus be supplemented to it, one will serve as a complement to the other and the problem will be solved to a great extent, in as much as the horoscope tells us the Varna of the child, whose inner nature it fore-casts. Thus the Varna or caste system is a boon, if it is utilized properly, otherwise it is a curse to humanity and human society. The Hindu society is at present, under the influence of the cast system which has degenerated into caste prejudice. As silk-worm is surrounded by its cocoon, so is the Hindu society beset with the caste prejudice. If the worm does not break open its prison-house, its death is certain, but if it goes out of its jail it escapes death, similarly if the Hindu society gets out of its prison of

caste prejudice, it will escape from death. What to speak of caste prejudice, a fellow of the Sadharana Dharma is required to be free from all prejudices, be they found in a religious sect, a social community or a political party.

11. Swami Rama, who preached the Sadharana Dharma in America and elsewhere under the names of the *Common Path* and the *Practical Vedants*, says that it is the *Practical* method of leading human life in accordance with the dictates of the *Vedanta*, hence it is called the *Practical Vedanta*. As it goes hand in hand with the advancing science and marches onward with the necessities of the times, so it is *Dynamic* and not *Statistics*. He distinguishes it from theology and "it, divested of its dogmatic excrescences, is essentially a mysterious process by which the mind or intellect reaches back and loses itself in the inscrutable source, the Great Beyond." Thus it verifies the etymology of the word *religion*, which is derived from *re*, back and *ligare*, to bind; as it is the *religion*, that "binds us back to the origin or the fountain-head".

12. Swami Rama does further add that the Sadharana Dharma or the Common Path incul-

culates the following principles;

- (1) Divinity of Man;
- (2) The whole word is bound to co-work with him who feels himself one with the whole world;
- (3) Keeping the body in active struggle and the mind in rest or love, means salvation from sin and sorrow right here in this life;
- (4) Active realization of At-one-ment with the All allows us a life of balanced recklessness;
- (5) The sacred Scriptures of all the world should be taken in the same spirit, as we study chemistry, holding our own experiment for ultimate authority.

13. Hence he gives his bold warnings against accepting a religion without examining it thoroughly, in the following words:—

- (1) Accept not a religion because it is the oldest; its being oldest is no proof of its being the true one. Some times the oldest horses ought to be pulled down and the oldest clothes must be changed.
- (2) Accept not a religion because it is the latest. The latest things are not always the best, not having stood the test of times.

- (3) Accept not a religion on the ground of its being believed by a vast majority of mankind, because the vast majority of the mankind believe practically in the religion of Satan, in the religion of ignorance.
- (4) Accept not a religion on the ground of its being believed in by the chosen few. Sometimes a small minority, that accepts a religion is in darkness, misled.
- (5) Accept not a religion because it comes from a great ascetic, from a man who has renounced every thing; because we see that there are many ascetics, men who have renounced every-thing, yet they know nothing, they are veritable fanatics.
- (6) Accept not a religion because it comes from princes or kings; Kings are often enough spiritually poor.
- (7) Accept not a religion because it comes from a person whose character was the highest; often times people of the grandest character have failed in expounding the truth.
- (8) Accept not a religion because it comes from a very famous man. Sir Issac Newton is very famous and yet his emiss-

-sory theory of light is wrong.

Thus "Believe in a religion *on its own merits*, examine it yourself. Sift it..... Sell not your liberty to Budha, Jesus, Muhammed or Krishna."

14. An American paper, The Rocky Mountain News of January 4, 1904 writes about Swami Rama's religion thus:—

".....He also has an ethical philosophy in which he teaches a religion, he calls the "Common Path, which he expounds to those interested wherever he goes..... the object of his philosophy is—

- (1) To regulate the conduct of the present life.
It has a plain practical bearing upon the things of today,
- (2) To minimise the waste of energy,
- (3) To abolish wear and tear of body and mind,
- (4) To secure freedom from all kinds of dissipation, due to envy, vanity, distemper and blues,
- (5) To cure mental dyspepsia and
- (6) To remove intellectual pauperism and spiritual slavery;
- (7) To attain the secret of the successful work;
- (8) To realise God through love;
- (9) To keep in touch with the origin of know-

ledge; and

(10) How to preserve our equilibrium....."

The Swami, as quoted by the paper, says "My religion is not Hinduism, Muhammadanism, Christianity, Catholicism, or Protestantism but it is antagonistic to none. The overlapping area covered by the light, the sun, the stars, the rivers, gravity, mind and body, this is the field of my religion. Are there any Presbyterian lilies? Are there any Methodist landscapes? So do I make no distinction of class, colour or creed in greeting as my co-religionist the rays of the sun, the beams of star, the leaves of trees, the blades of grass, the grains of sand, the hearts of tigers, elephants, lambs, ants, men, women and children. My religion is the religion without a nickname. It is the religion of nature. I label none, brand none, possess none, but serve all like light and sun. So I call it "The Common Path,"

15. What constitute the Common Path, the Sadharana Dharma or the Practical Vedanta, Swami Rama does himself describe it thus:—

- (1) Pushing marching *labour* and no stagnant indolence,
- (2) Enjoyment of work as against tedious

drudgery,

- (3) *Peace* of mind and no canker of suspicion,
- (4) *Organization* and no disaggregation;
- (5) *Appropriate reform* and no conservative customs,
- (6) *Solid real feelings* and no flowery talk;
- (7) *Poetry of facts* as against speculative fiction.
- (8) The logic of events as against the authority of the departed authors.
- (9) *Living realization* and no more dead quotations.

constitute the Practical Vedanta."

16. Rama says that he "brings you a religion which is found in the streets, which is written upon the leaves, which is murmured by the brooks, which is whispered in the winds, which is throbbing in your own veins and arteries; a religion which concerns your business and bosom; a religion which you have not to practise by going into a particular church only, a religion which you have to practise and live in your every day life, about your hearth, in your dinning room every where you have to live that religion.

17. What to speak of Swami Rama, the

Common Path or the Sadharana Dharma is the religion of all the great personages of the world, whether they have flourished in ancient times or do they exist now. It matters little if their religion has or has not been designated by this name. The first poet of the world, Valmiki does in his Epic poem attribute the *Sadharana Dharma* to be the religion of his hero, Lord, Rama Chandra. We find our Common platform in the Upanishadic period. The Sar Dharma of the Budhists and the *Din-e-Ilahi* of the Emperor Akbar are nothing but the different forms of the *Sadharana Dharma*. In our own days, His Holiness Swami Rama Krishna Paramhans was the embodiment of the *Sadharana Dharma*. His first birthday centenary has recently been celebrated for full twelve months, almost in every part of the civilised world; and his soul inspiring and strength-giving message has been communicated to the world by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda.

18. It is a strange coincidence that in the year 1873 when Swami Rama Tirtha came to light, Srijiut Sevabrat Sasipada Banerjee established a *Sadharana Dharma Sabha* in East Bengal, But it was soon converted into the *Sasipada*

Institute, for want of competent men to carry it on. However Mr. Banerjee has again established the *Devalaya* at Calcutta, with almost the same aims and objects as are of the *Sadharana Dharma Movement*.

19. His Holiness Omkar Swami, who has started a Shanti Ashram in Totapalli Hills, East Godawari District Madras, in the sacred memory of His Holiness Swami Rama Tirtha and has opened several other Peace centres at America with the co-operation of Sister Shushila Devi and other American friends, does also preach this *Universal Religion*.

20. Swami Rama, puts up the essential fundamental doctrines of his religion in the words of Goeth thus.

"I tell you what is my Supreme Vacation,
Before Me was no world 'tis My creation.
'Twas I who raised the Sun from out the Seas,
The moon began her changeful course with
Me."

Thus the Swami confirms it as basing it on the *adamantine rock* of the Vedanta in its *advait* aspect.

21. The three blades of the trident of the *Sadharana Dharma* are the physical, mental and

spiritual developments. Through this trident it destroys the triple sufferings and manifests peace or Bliss in the physical, mental and spiritual realms. The *Trinity of Rama* has played an important part in the formation of this trident in this present age. The first Rama of this trinity, *Raja Rama Mohan Roy* by his Dwait or Dualistic teachings has actuated our *hands* to take up all reform works and has thus taught us how to be a man of action. The second Rama, *Shri Rama Krishna Paramhansa*, has by his Visishta-dwait or qualified monism purified our *hearts* and has filled them with devotion and love; hence the hands of the Rama Krishna Mission are seen behind every social service, because the love in their pure hearts actuates their *hands*. The last but not the least Rama of this trinity is *Swami Rama Tirtha*, who by his bold Adwait or monistic teachings has developed our *heads* to know our real Self or in other words to realise Divinity. Thus this Rama has completed the Sadharana Dharma in this present age, in as much as the development of the three H's, the *Hands* the *Heart* and the *Head* or in the religious phraseology, of the *Karma*, the *Bhakti* and the *Jnana*, or in the other

words the awakening of the physical, mental and spiritual powers is the theme of the Sadharana Dharma. Most of our *Darshanic Pandits* or philosophers quarrel with each other taking part of *Dwait*, *Visihta-dwait* or *adwait* or in other words of action, devotion or wisdom, but they little know that for a man, who is made up of body, mind and intellect, all the three faculties of *willing*, *feeling* and *knowing* are essential; None can be said to be perfect unless one does harmoniously develop his *hand*, *heart* and *head*.

The same idea has been echoed in the following words by the Great Hero, Mahabir, who has sacrificed his so-called self-respect (मान) for the sake of service and is hence called Hanuman:—

देह दृष्ट्वा त्व दासोऽहम् जीव दृष्ट्वा त दंशकम् ।

वस्तु तस्तु तदेवाहम् इति मे निश्चिता मतिम् ॥

“When I identify myself with *body*, I am Thy slave; when I identify myself with *life*, I am Thy part and parcel: But in reality I am the same Divinity with Thee, this is my definite opinion”

It is what Mahabir the great hero replied to Lord Rama Chandra when asked how he was

related to Him.

It is true that Head is above all in body but it does not mean that its other parts be neglected. For this reason much stress is given on the Sharirik Dharma or the physical culture by the Sadharana Dharma. Swami Ram says that "physical exercise is as much important, for a follower of Sadharana Dharma, as is mental study or spiritual meditation" Through this physical exercise Swami Rama developed himself into a strong-built man from a thin, lean and sickly weakling. He stood ahead in running a 30 miles Marathon race and in climbing the peak of Shasta mountain starting with many American competitors.

22. Why is it called the Sadharan Dharma, because all the five essential qualities required by Dharma are signified by one word *Sadharana*, which means (1) *Simple* (2) *Easy* (3) *Natural* (4) *Universal* and (5) *Practical*. But when religion is made *complex* by sacreligious rites, or made *difficult* by scholastic pedantry or techecality or made *unnatural* by prejudice, or made *impracticable* by leading an easy or idle life, it ceases to be religion and becomes a curse instead of blessing. It is these evils that

have crept into the religion in this present age, and have made all peace-loving persons hate it and to become atheists rather than theists. The *Sadharana Dharma* aims at purifying religion from these evils and thus it does its best to convert this world into an ocean of happiness or *Sukh-Sagar* from that of sufferings or *Dukh-Sagar*.

23. The *Sadharana Dharma* does not only purify religion from these evils but at the same time, it is not indifferent to the mundane affairs of the world. Its great advocate, in the present age, Swami Rama has spoken bitterly against social and moral evils, and has left no stone unturned to raise the status of his country, as is evident from his "Appeal to America on behalf of India" and from his *National Dharma* and other similar writings and lectures.

"Sacrifice shall secure the freedom of this country...Mother India must be free", were his words to Mr. Puran, who went to see him at Shanti Ashram Muttra, on his return from foreign countries. Prakash who also went to the Ashram to see him at that time composed an ode called *Deshashtak*, taking materials for it from his talk at the Ashram. It is appended

to it.

24. Prakash cannot conclude this note without mentioning that Swami Rama's politics was above all policy and party-feelings because it was guided by spirituality. He was fully, conscious that without the cooperation of the spiritual and secular powers, there can be little development in any of them. He said that after the war of the Mahabharata the religion decayed because there were no Kshatriyas left to support the Brahmanas. Just as the lion, upon whom the Devi or Goddess rides, does make no general havoc but makes its prey only of them who are the foes of the Goddess, so the politics that is under the guidance of spirituality or religion is not a curse but it is a blessing as it destroys only those who deviate from the path of righteousness. Thus the Brahmana and the Kshatriya spirits are required to cooperate with each other. Nay; the Swami further adds that ".....to realise Bliss and Rama in that world or this and to give a living concrete objective reality to your subjective Dharma, you have to work this Sanyasa spirit, Brahmin. Kshatriya and Vaishya heroism through your hands and feet in the manual labour, once

relegated to the holy Sudras. The Sanyasi spirit must be wedded to the Pariah hands. This is the only way. today wake up! wake up!" Yes this co-operation is the secret of success. Hence he says that "Co-operation is better than competition." "It is true that he realised the whole world as his home as is the motto of the Sadharana Dharma Movement; yet his heart was burning for the uplift of the country in which he was born because it was his "*Swadharma*" which is not opposed to "*Sadharana Dharma*" as the former paves the path for the latter, hence Swami Rama announces in bold words that "A person can never realize unity with God, the All, except when the unity with the whole nation throbs in every fibre of his frame." In other words a person cannot realize his goal without passing through the several stages of the physical, mental and spiritual sphere or of domestic, social and political worlds. Thus the Sadharana Dharma does not teach us to neglect the attainment of worldly position, but on the other hand it teaches us how to pass through them successfully, as is explained in the "*Sadharana Dharma*" written by His Holiness Swami Savagan

Acharya.

25. While on being declared as the *vyas* of the age, the Great Teacher of the world said that "*The country should now no more be sad as her good days have now come*" and on the eve of his departure from this world he prophesied that "Whether working through many souls or alone, I seriously promise to infuse true life and dispel darkness and weakness from India within ten year; and *within first half of the twentieth century, India will be restored to more than its original glory. Let these words be recorded*" How she will be so restored is thus taught by this great Teacher" There is but one remedy and one disease. Nations can be cured and made free by the Life of Law (धर्म जीवन). Individuals can be made saints and higher than gods by the same."

Let us then join our hands irrespective of caste, colour or creed to follow this Law of Life. Is the appeal of

PRAKASH

देशाटक

1

काली माता काला नाग और फाटे गालिन राम।

1767

काले कृष्ण को तुमने पूजा पूजो हिन्द मुदाम ॥
अपने देश को यदि तुम पूजो पूरन होवें सारे काम ।
इष्ट देव यदि देश बनाओ चारों पदार्थ होवें राम ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥१॥

II

खंडन करके घर मत खोदो मंडन करके लेओ बना ।
छोड़ कुमत को सुमत करो तुम इससे होगा सदा भला ॥
देश तुम्हारा घोर नींद में एक मुदत से है सोता ।
जागना इसका होगा अद्भुत जाग के इसको लेओ जगा ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥२॥

III

गंगा जमुना यड़ और पीपल तुलसी पर्वत जल और थल ।
पीर फ़कीर और सिद्ध और साधू तुमने पूजे सब निश्चल ॥
राजा को और देश को पूजा पूजन तब तो होय सफल ।
भारत ही है सबकी माता पूजो इसको शिर के मल ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥३॥

IV

भारत ही से सबही लेते भोजन वस्त्र और दाना पानी ।
इन्डिया माँ का दूध है येही पलते जिससे भारत वासी ॥
हिन्दू मुसलिम, आर्या ब्राह्मणों पासों जैन और ईसाई ।
मिलते क्यों नहीं प्यार से माई जैसे दूध में दूध मिठाई ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥४॥

V

कोना गुस्ता और अदावत खीने से सब करदो दूर ।
माई माई से गळे तो मिलको जात पाँव को कर करफूर ॥
पल पात में आग लगादो तब हो रीशत ये कपूर ।

देश विदेश में फैले फिर तो भारत जन्मी काये नूर ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥५॥

VI

इन्डिया माँ है काली देवी करदो इसके भेंट ।
शीश रुधिर श्री जीवन अपना सोना खाना पीठ श्री पेट ॥
फूट श्रीर वैर को भेंट चढ़ाके डंडवत को तुम जाओ लेट ।
निर्भय हो निर्वैरी होके खुदगर्जी तुम डालो भेंट ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥६॥

VII

भूँकों नंगों की पे भाई करते फ्यों नहीं तुम छिपत ।
भूके विश्व नंगे शिव हैं नन्दी बेल है जिनकी सम्पत ॥
देश से बाहर जाकर भाई सोखते फ्यों नहीं सनभत हिर्रर ।
मेहनत की और खेती की तुम करते फ्यों नहीं सखो इज्जत ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥७॥

VIII

शङ्ख ब्राह्मण वैश्य श्री क्षत्री देश दितेशी आग में पड़ ।
सब ही देवता हैं घन जाते पहिले ही चढ़े कुछ गड़ बड़ ॥
कूड़ा कर्कट काष्ठ श्रीर चन्दन आग में करते हैं भड़ नड़ ।
आग बने जब पड़ के अन्दर दूर दूर तब सब तड़ पड़ ॥
भारतवासी सुनके इसको कुछ तो करलो अब तुम काम ॥८॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

DASHASHTAK

I

You have worshipped the mother Kali, the
black serpent and the black Shalig Ram as well

as black Krishna. Now always worship Hind (the literal meaning of which is black).

If you worship your country all the four blessings* will be your servants. *O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.*

II

Do not bring ruin to your house by adverse or destructive criticism, but build it by favourable or constructive ones. Having got rid of crookedness be upright: this will always do good.

Your country has been sleeping for a long time in deep sleep. Its waking will be wonderful, awake her after having awakened yourself.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.

III

Without hypocrisy you have worshipped the Ganga and the Jamuna, the Bargad and the Pipal, the Tulshi and the Mountain, the waters and the lands, as well as the Pirs and the faqirs, and the Sidhas and the Sadhus, viz. the saints

* The four padaratha or blessings are as under:—

1. Arth or the acquisition of wealth. 2. Dharma or the observance of duty. 3. Karm or the fulfilment of desires.
4. Moksha or the realization of Freedom.

and the adepts. Now worship the King and Country so that your worship may be crowned with success. Bharat is the mother of all (her children), worship her head-long.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.

IV

All (her children) get their food, clothing, bread and water from Bharata. All these suck her milk which nourishes all the residents of Bharata. O Hindu Muslim, Aryas, Brahmos Parsis, Jains and Christians! why do you not then mingle with one another, being persuaded by love, as is sugar mingled with milk.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work

V

Remove malice, anger and enmity from your bosoms. Let one brother embrace another after having got rid of the prejudices of caste and creed. Set fire to the prejudice, this camphor is then illumined. The light of Bharata will then spread at home and abroad.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.

VI

The mother India is the goddess Kali. Offer to her your head, blood, life, sleeping, eating and drinking, as well as *back* and *stomach*, viz. *rest* and *hunger*.

Sacrifice *phut* and *bair* viz. disunion and enmity and lie down to pay homage to Her. Be fearless by eradicating enmity (from your heart) and check out selfishness.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.

VII

O brothers, why don't you serve them who are hungry and naked. Those who are hungry are *Vishna* and those that are naked are *Siva*, whose property in *Nandi* (ox).

Why don't you learn arts and industry having gone abroad, and why don't you pay true respect to viz. proper attention for labour and agriculture.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.

VIII

The Sudra, the Brahmins, the Vaishyas and the Kshattariya falling into the furance of patriotism are converted into gods, though there

may be some confusion in beginning. The sweeping, scavengings, the ordinary and the sandal wood, all these when thrown into the furnace burst forth with noise within fire, but all this noise is off when they are converted into fire by being thrown therein.

O residents of Bharata take lesson from this and do some work.



P. S. Some of the messages received on Swami Rama's birth-days prior to it are appended to this to make it more useful to those who are intrested in Swami Rama's Soul-inspiring Life and Teachings.

Prakash



APPENDIX

1

Oh Lord Rama, dear Rama, great Rama, sweet Rama, Oh Rama of my soul, I bow to thee in tune with my soul.

My hearty prayers to your great noble soul:

After the period of one thousand years great philosopher ज्योतिषर् like Swami Rama Tirtha has enlightened the land of Bharata.

It is a great pity that the mentality of our people is so much backward due to imperfect and misleading education that we have, till now, not been able to know our great Lord Ramatirtha who has already spread the true light of knowledge ज्ञान in the western civilised land.

Swami Ramatirtha was a great Mission of Bharata. Swamiji has begun quite a new and perfect era in the history of religion and philosophy. He has taught the progressive world at large that World-Brotherhood is our destination and it is the only and ultimate goal of true religion. Present League of Nations at Geneva, is the

indirect result of the true doctrines of our great prophet, Swami Rama Tirtha. Wise American people understand and admire our Rama so much that they have got 'Rama Society' in America. In India there are very few fortunate people even to know Rama. Never mind that; Swami Ji's great and universal truth will tear the old wall of time and circumstances and will effect the mentality of our country-men in the course. Then and then only, India will march to the real road of progress after the present awakening Caused by the great Gandhiji.

In a dry subject such as religion, Swami Rama has explained the truth in such a sweet and direct method that the American people have loved Rama so much that we cannot describe in speech.

The light of the great torch of knowledge ज्योतिर्घर् is beginning to effect our Indian mentality though slowly but steadily,

The League at Lucknow, is the exact proof of that effect and by and by, at proper times there will be many such leagues in India and the future children of this glorious land will drink this nectar of Swami Rama Tirtha. During the life time of Swami ji our people were so much

backward in education and knowledge that Swami ji was not perfectly valued by the then Indian Society.

In such a dire circumstances, Swami Rama Tirtha, with the only weapon of truth and knowledge had successfully proclaimed to the world that "Bhartiya Civilisation" is the real, original and exact way to happiness. The same truth, the same enlightenment will now surely spread in the glorious land of Swami Rama Tirtha, in due course.

For the solution of our social and political questions, we people must not be hasty and should never be allured by the western styles and civilisation. We must begin our progress with the help of our own ideals of our original civilisation which Swami ji has explained to the world at large, Swami ji's doctrines are the doctrines of Bharata and we must now begin to follow the same faithfully and peacefully. Western styles and civilisation are not quite appropriate for us because our's are quite perfect and no doubt greater. Our ideals can surely lead us to happiness. It is the universal truth. Amen.

In conclusion I complete my short idea and

stop my pen worshipping our dear and own
 Rama:—

रामाश्रित परायणं परतरं
 रामस्य दासो स्यई ।
 रामे चित्तलयः सदा भवतुमे
 भी राम मामुद्धर

BAPAT P. DESAI,
 HONORARY SECRETARY
 ENLIGHTENED BHARAT SOCIETY,
 BOMBAY.

The most fitting celebrations of the Birth-Day of Swami Rama Tirtha would be putting into practice the message that he gave to redeem humanity from slumber and sloth. Such occasions like this serve but as days for taking stock of what we have done, how we have striven in our own lives, to live and verify the verities enshrined in the precepts laid forth and examples set, by the greatest leaders of mankind like Swami Rama.

Rama's was a dynamic message, an effective expression of the life that he lived in tune with the Infinite. He was a practical Vedantin preaching only what he had verified in life. He was not a mere perceptor but a prophet, a sage and a seer. In him we discern the great Upanishadic Truths re-lived with unique and irresistible force. Rama was divinely reckless, care-free from the clutches of the world, unspoiled by the evils of society and untouched by the ills that human flesh is heir to. The imperial and imperious note that he struck was that of freedom—freedom from every kind of bondage,—freedom

from the greatest of all ills viz. the ill of being a slave to Sansara. Rama was up against fruitless academic discussions and quoting dead lines from texts. He upheld practical and active life in the spirit, a religious and metaphysical dynamism and not a philosophical passivism and important *quietism*. The constituents of Practical Vedanta which according to Rama, ought to be the guiding tenets for the workers in the vineyard of Truth, are "pushing, marching labour and not stagnant indolence, enjoyment of work as against tedious drudgery, peace of mind and not the canker of suspicion, appropriate reform and not conservative custom, solid real feelings as against flowery talk, the poetry of facts as against speculative fiction, the logic of events as against the authority of departed authors, living realization and not mere dead quotation." This is Swami Rama's recipe as the remedy for all the despondencies and depressions of the present-day world. Could we but follow his foot-steps, we would rid us and humanity of all the miseries born of ignorance and reach the Right of Wisdom, the Eternity of Truth and the Fellicity of Bliss.

Swami Rama has brought home to us many

a precious Truth enshrined in the most enchanting words. The greatest homage that we can do to him, the best method of perpetuating his memory is to pave the way for him to celebrate his Birth-Day in our very hearts and homes. He wants us to be reformers not of others but of ourselves. He wants us to win not university laurels but victory over the local self. He wants our age not to be counted in terms of temporal years. But he wants us to brim with the Youth of Divine Joy. If we satisfy all these conditions Swami Rama guarantees us the salary of God-head. We need apply with no begging solicitations but we can demand with commanding decision. Let us apply sharp, bestir ourselves, rise from the lethargy of ignorance, and realise the SELF, Sat-Chit-Anand. And this is Joy of ONENESS and the BLISS of ALL-NESS.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.

SWAMI RAJESWARANANDA,

PRESIDENT,

SRI SATCHIDANADNA SANGHA,

TRIPLICANE, MADRAS,

AND AUTHOR OF 'KNOW THYSELF',

'GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS', 'REVELATION'.

'ATMA SUDHA', 'FLASHES OF GRACE' ETC

"Be not a slave and a bondsman. Be free in soul, be free in spirit. Believe not in any dogmas for their own sake. Believe not in an ideal howsoever lofty. Believe not in the person even though he be the most high-souled. Obey only the dictates of your conscience, the promptings of your own inner voice. Judge for yourself. Be not guided by the wise counsels of even the greatest luminaries of mankind such as Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Shankar etc. If you are convinced to the core that what they preached is truth and truth alone, then act up to their theories. If their dogmas go against your own experiences, throw them overboard and judge for yourself. That is the true spiritual path".

To my mind, this is the most fundamental principle of Swami Rama's teachings. He stands for full freedom, nothing short of it. Human nature is diverse, it is varied. Each individual has his own peculiar traits. He has got something all his own. He cannot share it with others. Both by nature and in nature, he

differs immensely from everyone amidst whom he moves and has his being. This very fact leads him to adopt methods, ways, and means best suited to his own individual nature. The methods followed by others may not work out the same desired results as they did in the case of others. He needs his own methods for his own spiritual elevation. Of course, another's experience may guide him and may prove to be a beacon light in his onward march to the 'Abode Celestials'. But that will not be exactly what he needs. He may gain by their teachings, but not wholly. He has to find a way for himself. If need be, he has to make one for himself. As the greatest master. "All teachers have their own masterly limitations. Be not a slave to their principles. No blind faith. Reason out thread-bare. If they carry conviction home, then and then only accept them. It would be irreligious, nay sacrilegious to reject their experience if it tallies with all that your inner promptings convey in the spirit and soul of your own spiritual entity. So also it would be wrong; foolish and sinful to do what they said as a dumb sheep when your own heart is hotly revolting against it. Look to the following words of Rama:

“Accept not a religion because it is the oldest. Accept not a religion because it is latest. Accept not a religion on the ground of its being believed by a vast majority. Believe not in a religion on the ground of its being believed by the chosen few. Believe not in a religion because it comes from a very famous man. Accept a thing and believe in a religion on its own merits, Examine it yourself. Lift it. Sell not your liberty to Krishna, Budha, Jesus or Mahomet. Be free, free to look at everything by your own light.”

You are Christ, Budha, Shankara or Chaitanya, Rama and Krishna, for yourself what one human soul was, every other can be. Every creature emerging out of the human species has in the depths of his own soul immense potentialities, hidden and latent, which blow up and explode when the least spark of fire is thrown against them, and issue forth, to the great wonder of the whole universe, as the greatest apostles of truth, the blessed salt of humanity. They were and therefore we can also be. Do not belittle yourself. You are all that was, all that is and all that is to be. Do not shut yourself with in narrow limits. Make your vision broad and

wide. Expand your own spiritual being and let it hold in its purview all that falls to its lot.

To each of us, religion must be offered in our own individual form. One person's battle is continuous with another's but not exactly another's. It may help him but it is not quite the same. Everyone is sent on diverse missions. Therefore you must work out and let others work out their unique kind and their unique spiritual development in view of each other and of what they have to do and be. You cannot, therefore, point out to any single mode or method or Sadhana, and say this is good and no other, and the rest is dead deprivation. It is foolish to say that this or that privation or deprivation is a necessary spiritual loss. We are not entitled to judge that the unique mode which carries the individual beyond himself is wrong simply because it is different from your own. Nothing can impair or defeat the possibilities of good. As someone has so lucidly put it "The ways and conditions of spiritual productiveness are infinitely various, and in each case unique." So everyone should be free to judge for himself. Do not sell your freedom. Depend not upon out

side aid, depend upon your own inner agency. Seek help only from within from the spirit within. That is necessary, nothing else. Gurus do help no doubt. But they have their own limitations. Ultimately you are to plan the roll of a teacher for yourself and finally lead yourself to the realization of the Infinite.

So Sawmi Rama stands for freedom, unalloyed liberty to each individual in his spiritual life and he also cautions us against narrow dogmatism and with all the convictions of his heart drags us to a state of infinite tolerance always reminding us that human nature is infinitely varied and as such admits of means also infinitely various. There is a multiplicity of means to the same end - God - realization.

I was hardly born when Rama quitted this mortal frame. I had no chance of meeting him in flesh. My only association with him is through the books and from the verbal account given by my preceptor Sri R. S. Narayana Swami, his chief disciple than whom there is no better authority and who can well expound Swami Rama's teachings. In all humility, I must own I have tried to drink deep at the fountain of Swami Rama's Divine ecstasy.

The irrepressible reveries of the madman, dancing to the tune of supreme harmony and 'raising the stars as dust in Heaven,' laughing and laughing, is surely a state hardly equalled by other souls of self realization. Whence comes this wild laughter? whence is this divine madness. Rama says "It is through Renunciation!" Renounce everything, swap all ties! Sever all your connections. Let your relation be only with the Divine. Be off, be off from all worldly attachments. This is the passport to the Assembly Hall of the Divine! You are ever entitled to have a free entry to it, irrespective of caste, colour or creed, the only stipulation being that you should have to prove yourself to have been nonworldly intoto.

By renunciation, Rama means full self surrender. When you surrender yourself entirely to the Divine will and merge yourself wholly into it. "Woe unto the gods if they do not obey you." Such is the enormous strength and power which you draw unto yourself! Intense craving after Godhead of the highest type is seen in Swami Rama. In the woods of Brahmapuri just beyond Rishikesh, he tore his bosom to see if the Divine dwelt therein

as the learned spoke He does! He would often times chide himself and the whole Vedantic love and say "O! Turya (तुर्या) are you only to be found in the books and the Vedic scriptures? Days and nights, in continuous succession passed and still no realization! Why continue to live without having to enjoy that blissful state? Better give up the body ! And lo! Rama is seen swinging himself headlong into the bosom of his 'Dear Gangi' from the the fatal heights of the Himalayan peaks ! But the holy mother Ganga takes tenderly into her soft bosom and gives unto him his long cherished ideal !

In another place, we read that Swami Rama's life was that of continuous tears. He wept till his cushions were drenched in those holy waters! How afflicted he felt in those states of intense yearning and longing? "Day passes into night and night turns into day and here is your Rama having no time to do anything, busy, very busy, in doing nothing. Tears keep pouring, vying well with the continuous rains of the most rainy District ! The hairs stand on end, the eyes wide open, seeing nothing of the things before them. Talk stopped, work stopped unfortunately (!) no most fortunately ! O, Leave

me alone! But this was a necessary stage on to his future-development and ere long we find Rama blooming forth into the lovely buds of God-intoxication proclaiming at the top of his voice "Happy is he who is drowned in Heavenly intoxication. Blessed is he who is dead drunk in Divine madness! Worshipful is he who is absorbed in deep Atmananda and Supreme bliss, lost to the world!"

As Swami Rama himself has put it "If anybody asked me to give my philosophy in one word, I would say "Self-realization" i. e. knowledge of the Self. The essentials and fundamental doctrines of his religion may be put in the words of Goethe:—

"I tell you what is man's supreme vacation
Before me was no world, 'tis my creation.
'T was I who raised, the sun from out the sea
The moon began her changeful course with
me!"

Happy indeed is the man who stands in opposition to all worldliness and asserts his own Divinity! The very moment he is ready to stand up for his Divinity, that very moment, the whole world is bound to regard him as God! "Realize yourself to be saved and saved you

are.' 'Your Godhead is not a thing to be accomplished. Realization is not a thing to be achieved. You have not to do anything to gain God-vision. You are simply to undo what you have already done in the way of forming dark cocoons of desires around you. So Self-realization is mainly a process of undoing and unlearning! forgetting what you know yourself to be! nothing more than that. This is the highest state and but for that not an unattainable one! For he says, "It is easy to be great as it is easy to be small!"

Sawmi Rama was the master-genius of very rare Divine gifts. His rose-like ecstasy is all his own. A moment's blessed company of such maddened souls gives you a swing and bears you unto the realms of eternal quietude! Like meteors, they are thrown into the cosmic structure. They are sent on an expressly fixed mission. That done, they pass away who can say Rama's mission is not being done? Moving about through the length and breadth of India, I find almost every educated Indian having the least spark of Divine consciousness in him plodding his way "In Woods of God-realization" now umbling, now gaining his ground, but ever

hopeful of reaching the goal. Swami Rama is serving humanity better after his demise than when in body. To the lost humanity, he gives a practical method of realizing Godhead and says:-

“The time to be happy is now
 The place to be happy is here
 And the way to be happy
 Is to make others so !”

In conclusion, let Rama speak for himself:—

“Such leading geniuses come into the world only for a short time, not to finish their plan, but simply to suggest it to their survivors. Their work, like the flash of lightening, is only suggestive, not exhaustive. They throw some guiding hints to man and disappear. Every such genius is the centre of some constructive forces needed at the time when they are born. They draw out the love of the people in a peculiar way to themselves and when the people begin to depend upon them, they leave the people in great bewilderment to look up to themselves and stand on their own legs.”

Om ! Om !! Om !!!

HIS HOLINESS SWAMI RAMANANDAN

M. A.

HYDRABAD (DECCAN).

PART I

Beloved Rama in the form of Sisters and Brothers:—

Greetings of Peace and Love.

It does not seem possible that a whole year has passed away so soon, since we had the privilege of sharing the love of all of you, at Sri Swami Rama's Birthday Celebration last year.

It seems as if it was only yesterday, that we were sitting in the sacred company of Sriman Narayana Swamiji and other devoted souls on the raised platform, longing to enter into the open hearts of the lovers of Rama gathered in a kindred spirit of unity and devotion.

Yet, one full year, consisting of twelve months or three hundred and sixty-five days has passed away. How time is fleeting! It has been said! Time and tide wait for no man. They ebb and flow in Eternity so do all created beings and things.

Blessed are they who are above time, but how few and rare are such God-intoxicated souls full

of self-realization! Unto such, neither days nor months; 'neither years nor centuries exist. They live in eternity and abide by no laws.

It was Rama, who said, that days when merged in Him, pass without the need of even a morsel of food, and nights without even a wink of sleep. Such is the divine ecstasy of emancipated souls, who have risen above time.

Time hangs heavy on the heads of lazy people, and all those who have no ideal or goal in life. They try to kill, as it were the precious time, the incalculably valuable time, that fleeting time, which can never be regained by any earthly sacrifices, or tears or fervent wishes.

The most vital point with which we are concerned now is how far we have neared the holy spirit of Rama, since we celebrated his anniversary in this place a year ago? How far have we grown, assimilating the Infinite Love of Rama? If we are devoid of silent and steady progress, if we are not reaching the Heights that were trodden by Rama and if we are not trying to lose ourselves in Rama forgetting the little selves—what practical benefit is there in meeting year after year to commemorate Rama's Anniversary?

Dear Beloved Lovers of Blessed Rama; if you believe in the statement that we do not live where our bodies are but that we live where our minds are, then we request you to believe, that we are with you now mentally and spiritually, taking part in Rama's celebration with you and bathing in his love. How blessed it is to live in Rama all the year round, each and every day, celebrating his anniversary not only once a year, but every day and in every moment of our lives!

What is Rama's message? What is his highest message? His real message can never be given in words, neither can it be understood through words! To understand his sublime message we must become still and silent. It is in silence, the deep and nameless silence, where senses are no senses, mind is no mind, intellect is no intellect, wherein the ego or the little "I" dissolves like a mere bubble in the mighty ocean, we can feel, understand and comprehend the holy message of God-imbued Rama.

It was Rama who has given us that beautiful and instructive illustration of how a king was testing the skill and workmanship of two artists by asking them to paint some pictures, on walls

opposite to each other in his palace. One man painted the most exquisite picture, in a most wonderful manner, drawing the attention and appreciation of the king.

But when the king with his courtiers went to see the workmanship of the second artist, lifting the screen on the opposite wall, they all become speechless, and dumb founded with ecstasy over the dazzling beauty of the second divinely inspired artist.

Rama relates that the second artist did not paint at all but he was all the while engaged in rubbing, and polishing the wall again and again till in its transparent smoothness was reflected the first painters' picture with a thousand-fold beauty, grandeur and ethereal softness.

Similarly my friends, you have been listening to all the sacred songs and holy speeches of the renowned speakers and the sermons of great saints. Now, I beg you to give me the privilege of not making a speech but of helping you with my humble request to scrub and rub the mirrors of your hearts to reflect His full glory! Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. O! let us purify our hearts. Let us be still and silent so that these beautiful speeches and melodious

songs will be reflected in the inner sanctuary of our hearts. Let us attune ourselves with Rama's silent spirit so that his message will be indelibly imprinted in the sacred centres of the sanctuary of our hearts.

Receptivity is what the world is sadly in need of. We read, hear and speak of many noble things almost every day. But they are not going within us. As some say, all the teachings and messages are entering into us through one ear and are passing out through the other ear. Let our hearts be not like iron, hard and inflexible but let them be as soft as butter so that any good impression can be easily imprinted and deeply moulded therein.

In memory of Rama's celebration shall we make our hearts pure and receptive so that his message not only enters in, but soaks and saturates through every atom, becoming a part and parcel of the very blood and flesh of our beings!

Let us be still and in the great stillness let us realize that Rama's spirit is never separate, aloof nor away from us. It is within and without pervading and permeating the very cells of our beings. Let us now feel—feel—feel Rama's *love-life* and *light* in stillness, and also express him

in our activities and duties of the outer world and may all our thoughts, words and deeds be in harmony with the message of Self-realization so dear to this great saint.

May the universal spirit of Rama ever reflect and eternally abide in the receptive purified and consecrated hearts of all of us is the prayer of your own brother OMKAR.

May Peace be unto all !

OM TAT SAT.

PART II

(Next year)

Beloved Rama in the form of Sisters and Brothers:—

Greetings of Peace and Love.

How blessed are the lives that have the privilege of assembling here on this sacred day to commemorate the day of Swami Rama Tirthaji who had been a living flame of God-consciousness!

Before great souls like Narayana Swamiji, Mahraj and other holy ones, who had the blessed opportunity of knowing Swami Rama in flesh: it will be mere child's prattle if I try to give Rama's life. I leave that side of life to those,

who are more worthy and efficient to instill his spirit into your hearts. I want to share with you only my personal experiences of what Rama had been and meant in my life.

It was at the age of sixteen I happened to come across a book on the life and teachings of Rama and at eighteen I embraced Rama leaving the world of duality, in his name. What I am, nay all that is best and noble in me, I owe it only to Rama's divine life of renunciation and illumination. These physical eyes never beheld the physical form of Rama, yet it is his love and inspiration that pervades and permeates the very cells, filling my whole being. Such is the glory and power of an ideal life of even one single soul.

Rama's clarion call REFORMERS WANTED NOT TO REFORM OTHERS BUT TO REFORM THEMSELVES has made a deep and lasting impression on me in my very tender years, and since then I have been ceaselessly engaged in reforming myself within and without always trying to share what I have with my fellow sisters and brothers both in East and West.

As we look around with open eyes, how busy

are the people trying to reform others instead of reforming themselves! All are anxious to remove the mote in front of the eye of others, ignoring the beams in their own.

It is high time to realize that it is the individual Peace that paves the way towards the Universal Peace. We may not be able to establish Peace on earth but we can establish Peace, atleast in our own hearts. We may not be able to change the world but we can change ourselves. We may not be able to change the conditions or environments in the outer life but we can mould our inner life in such manner as to ignore the externals.

So my friends, I raise Rama's voice again in repeating that we should reform ourselves through self-purification, ever walking in his foot-steps, identifying ourselves with immortal Rama both, for our benefit and for the good of humanity.

I love to end my tiny message repeating the soul stirring prophecy of Swami Rama which is the soul and goal of all humanity.

PROPHECY OF RAMA TIRTHA

"O Princes, Priests, Shudras and Ruling classes of India; can you conceive the state of

affairs a few years hence? Call it odd and curious; yet I see before me a world of Swamis; Gods walking on the face of the earth; clay-classifications of man swept away; the distinctions in India, China, America, England, etc., dissolved; new crystals springing up to be dissolved again in their turn.

O dreaming darlings! Cast away the scales from your eyes and see the highest Sanyasins joining hands with the lowest shudras; lo, there! the begging bowl converted into a spade or a hoe, Sanyasins shorn of their laziness and shudra-labour exalted to the dignity of Sanyasa, the spirit of renunciation actuating all; shameless boldness of a harlot and the purity of Rama combined, the tenderness of a lamb wedded to the resolute interpidity of a lion, the extremes meet and the intermediate unnatural distinctions dissolved, the world becomes one family, See all this, look there and see, AMEN."

This is a message to me, to you—the lovers of Rama to all the seekers of Truth and to the whole of humanity. What a great privilege it is to be blessed with a universal vision and to feel and exclaim:—

THE WORLD IS MY HOME AND ITS PEOPLES ARE

MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS AND TO LOVE AND
SERVE THEM IS MY RELIGION.

Dear Friends, this can never be Rama's day if we cannot feel his presence or fail to identify with him. Even in memory of that great soul O! let us forget our tiny forms and little names and recognize the one presence of Rama everywhere.

In conclusion I request you all to join me in a deep and silent meditation, recognizing Rama's presence within and without in the stillness of our hearts as well as in the outer activities of our lives.

It is Peace within and without. It is Illumination above and below. It is Rama's presence all around.

May we ever abide in this Eternal Oneness and Indivisible Love, always feeling the Spirit of Rama, is the constant prayer of your own brother Omkar.

Om! Om !! Om !!!

SWAMI OMKAR

EDITOR OF THE PEACE

SHANTI ASRAM POST, TOTAPALLI HILLS,
EAST GODAVARI DT, S. INDIA
MADRAS.

The beautiful Hindu Festival of Lights and Sri Rama's anniversary marks for us the swift cycle of another year.

The memory of last dear's happy gathering here at Lucknow, and the boundless friendliness of Sri Swami Narayanji and the elect group gathered about him, often blooms up in my heart like a great golden lotus.

Now you are gathered again for a Love-feast at the feet of Master Rama Tirtha and my spirit is with you, my Beloved Spiritual Kindred and greets you with a tender greeting of Peace.

As we glance into the heart of this world of pain we almost mourn the early demise of the Torch-bearer Rama Tirtha for, never were Mahatmas of his order so much needed, to proclaim far and wide the message of Peace and the wonderful secret of Self Realization. However on this auspicious occasion let us fully rejoice at the great work the Universal Saint Rama has been able to do, a work which goes on with added power from year to year, testifying that Rama with all the forces of the Cosmic now at His command, is with us

“What though men hear not?
 Messengers of Heaven
 Can but discharge their duty;
 And it is—To tell their message.”

So too in the footsteps of all the great Companions of Humanity, the Heaven-sent Punjabi Saint passed through our earthly vale inscribing his mesage of Liberation for all beings, on the hearts of men.

Sri Swami Narayanaji, that staunch and rugged prophet, the Rama Tirtha Publication League, Santi Asram, Hipperge High School and the Universal Peace Institnte of America, bear witness to what can be done by and through the fiery mission of one great soul with God-vision.

Sitting at His Lotus Feet, let us also strive, as never before, to attain the great Beatific Vision which endues the power that changes the very law of gravitation, giving Wings of Freedom to earth-bound mankind, so that they rise and fly into the open circle of the Sun of suns.

Ah! how the nerves tingle and the heart palpitates at Saint Rama's clarion call to tear away the concealing veils of little egoism and enter the silent, innert tabernacle of the heart,

and in nameless wonder comes face to face with Divinity! O glory, glory!

This is the Desire of Ages—this is the one great theme that the Heaven-sent have cried out in the wilderness of the world, to the hearts of men. And yet we find people feverishly searching without, in quest of the most Priceless Treasure. Outer search away from the Centre of Love and Wisdom only leads to ever greater ignorance, delusion and restlessness. The inner quest only leads to peace, poise and power. Instead of travelling to distant and forbidden lands at the top of this world, or plunging into the dangerous astral realms, how much more tranquil, direct and redeeming to merge in the cool quiet, Ocean of Love.

Perfect meditation, or going deep within, is not so easy, but neither are precious pearls gotten by lazily gazing at the ocean or running about splashing on the shore.

Pearls are obtained by diving deep, deep down, by skillfully avoiding sharks and octopuses and other mighty monsters, and in the quiet ocean depths seizing and holding fast, the treasure obtained, after effort and patient search. The Pearl-fisher too, strips himself of all impend-

ing weights and garments as he fearlessly dives deep down.

So too the Priceless Pearl of Love, Wisdom or God-realization is only for the valiant. It is for the soul who will forego all worldly impediments and stripped of all, risking life itself, will plunge deep into the Ocean of Divinity. He must also evade all the astral monsters of Maya that wish to prey upon him. He must search long, and patiently too, and then seizing upon the pearls of Truth, will not only adorn his own heart with them, but share them with the whole world. The Viveka Chudamani, Crest Jewel of Wisdom and peerless pearls have been found by Sri Rama Tirtha, they are his God-consciousness, ideals and messages, which he shares with us—all so precious,

Ah! That is why we may well write his name in the book of Love in our hearts, as an ideal sage. And, to love him as he would be loved, we must imbue his spirit and live his message.

MAY PEACE BE UNTO ALL!

Om, Om, Om!

SISTER SUSHILA DEVI,

(Miss Ellen St. Clair Nowald) of America.

SWAMI RAMA AND UNTOUCHABLES.

Mahatma Gandhi while commenting on the earth-quake of Bihar, designated as a *Khand Pralaya* (Partial destruction) by the news-papers, said that it was the result of the oppressions made by the so-called high caste Hindus upon the so-called low caste ones (Harijanas). On this remark of the Mahatma, the great poet laureate Sir Ravindra Nath Tagore, whom the Mahatma acknowledges as his 'Guru Deva' raised an objection. The Mahatma refuted it vigorously in a long article, supporting it with reasons and arguments, that the earth-quake was certainly the result of the oppressions and tyrannies made by the caste Hindus upon the Harijanas. But 35 years hence, the heart-piercing thoughts produced by His Holiness Swami Rama Tirtha on January 28, 1903, at America, show that the Mahatma Gandhi's remarks are nothing but the echoes of the same thought. Swami Rama painting the deplorable conditions of the Hindu

Society said as under:—

“The downfall of India, the decline of India, is explained by Vedanta Philosophy. It is a matter of *Karma*.....The literal meaning of the word *Karma* is ‘action’, ‘our own doing’. This, what they are reaping, is what they sowed for themselves the other day. As the Hindus ill-treated the aborigines of India, so they in their turn are being treated by the conquering nations.”

He further adds that:—

“Political Economy tells us about division of labour. In a factory or a mill, in order that the whole business may prosper, the work ought to be divided up.....Division of labour is lawful, is necessary, and on this principle of division of labour at one time in India, the Caste system was systematized and established. It was simply a division of labour and nothing else; one man taking up the duty of a priest, another man taking up the duty of a warrior,.....There were some other people who were more fit for sedentary professions as of a shop-keeper. There were especially the aborigines who were not cultured in the least, who received no education, who

spent their childhood and boyhood in idling away their time. These people could not take up the work of a priest; they could not take up the work of a warrior, because they had received no drill, no discipline necessary for wars. They were unable to work even as shop-keepers.....These people were willing to take up the task of a common labourer, of a sweeper, or a labourer who breaks stones on the roadside. Thus were the four divisions brought about in the way of transacting business in India. The people of priest-caste were called Brahmins, the people who did the duty of warriors were called Kshatriyas, the people who worked as shop-keepers or merchants were called Vaishyas, and the people that pursued common manual labour were called Sudras. There was no prohibition nor any stringent law to disallow a man from taking up any work he liked.

"In India there was written on Hindu Law a work called *Manu Smriti*. That book was a help to all classes in those days. To each class it gave different suggestions, directions, methods and rules for conducting business. By and by this book was misread and misinterpreted, and somehow or other everything was turned topsy-

turvy, everything was upset. All this class-system and the system of division of labour was stultified, ossified, mummified or petrified. They gave it rigidity, they made it crystallized and the nation's life was gone. Everything became mechanical and artificial. *Manu Smriti* instead of serving the people became a despotic tyrant. The terrible blunder which has to account for the downfall of India to-day, was the stultifying, the paralyzing of this division, the crystallizing of this division. Thus arose the present Caste system of India, her greatest bane.

"The fleeting rules and regulations of *Manu Smriti*, by and by usurped and monopolized all the honour and respect which was due to Shruti or to the imperishable Truth preached in the Upanishads of Vedanta. People began to live for the rules and laws, instead of realizing that all rules and laws are for them. The authority of the dead past was over-rated and placed far higher than the dictates of the living Atma-deva, the God within. Man was practically made only the flesh and blood, the Brahman or Kshatriya; the real Self, the eternal Truth, was ignored entirely to all intents and purposes. Fear of Caste-rules and

sea. I am the graceful gait of the breeze and I am the wind inebriated. These forms of mine are wandering forms of change. I came down from the tops, knocked at doors, awakened the sleeping, consoled one, wiped the tears of another, covered some, took off the veils of others, I doff my hat, and off I am. I keep nothing with me. Nobody can find me."

Shortly after the farewell message was written. Rama went to bathe in the biling Ganga, near Tehri Garhwal, and was accidentally drowned. This was in October 1906, when Rama was a youth of thirty-three, and thus his brief but bright saintly career came to a sudden end.

Short as Rama's life was, he left a rich spiritual legacy which the generations that come after him will cherish with gratitude, living true to the ideals of Hindu Dharma, which, to this day is the admiration of the whole world. Although during his lifetime many of his admirers urged him to establish Societies, Rama did not agree, saying that he would prefer to work through the existing ones.

It might be well to conclude this article by saying that such leading genius comes into this world only for a short time, not to "finish" their plan, but simply to suggest it to their survivors. Like lightning their work is only suggestive, and never exhaustive. They throw some guidings hints to the world and disappear; they form part of the great constructive force working in its inscrutable ways.

May Rama's life and teachings be a guide and inspiration to all!

1767

Swami Rama Tirtha

His teaching was: 'Be Fearless.'

Swami Rama was born in 1873 in a poor Goswami Brahmin family of Muraliwala, in Gujranwala District, Punjab. He lost his mother within a few days after his birth. His father, Goswami Hiranand, who was Guru of the Hindus of the North West Frontier Province eked out a precarious livelihood by his spiritual ministrations. As a boy, Swami Rama was a very industrious student who had to struggle hard with penury, as the slender means of his father could not support him. It was said of him that sometimes he would forego a meal to provide for the oil of his midnight lamp in his college days. Though he starved sometimes for days together, he exhibited no signs of suffering or sorrow but always attended college regularly with a calm and cheerful face. His college career did not in the least afford any glimpse of his future greatness but he cherished high ideals and assiduously applied himself to the acquisition of knowledge.

Vast and Varied Studies.

Indeed so vast and varied were his studies that it looked as if there was no branch of human thought with which he was not acquainted. He was at home with the whole literature of Eastern and Western philosophy and the works of Sufi-mystics of Persia, besides being acquainted with all that was best in Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi poets. He was said to have mastered the Upanishads even in his college days. He was always ahead of his fellow-students and took his M. A. degree in Mathematics at the early age of twenty being reduced to a mere skeleton due to the effects of poverty and hard study.

With indomitable will he resolved to acquire bodily strength by means of regular exercise and nourishing diet. Even afterwards his exercise became so regular and methodical that he would not miss it even for a day. His once frail body became so strong and agile that in competition with some soldiers he won a forty-mile race in America, coming two hours ahead of all. He was a great walker and mountain climber.

With abundance of spiritual and physical energy everyone could see in him an apt illustration of the old adage "a sound mind is a sound body."

After taking his M. A. degree he served as a Professor and Lecturer for four years of different subject and became a Sannyasin at the age of twenty-six. He preferred solitude to society and his constant companionship with nature helped him to the realisation of the oneness of the Nature-Soul and the Man-Soul. Even while in America he used to seek soul-rest by resorting to the hills and mountains unable to stand the bustle of the city.

Emotional.

Swami Rama was of a highly emotional temperament. His deep sincerity, irresistible sweetness and moving sympathy often used to express themselves in tears, while his meditations on the Divine led him into a state of semi-madness or God-intoxication. With all this there was in him the spontaneous serenity and joy of a natural man, which sometimes burst out into peals of laughter at the sight of others—a laughter

which touched the inmost core of their hearts making them feel that the swami knew everything of them. Swami Rama's cheerfulness was the natural expression of the relaxation of the presence of the Divine Spirit in everything and in himself. Even in the midst of his merriment he would turn inwards, become silent and utter the sacred syllable "Om." Swami Rama used to say of himself, "I am a storm of peace." I am a tempest of joy." A good deal can be quoted from his writings, but the following prophecy is of particular interest in modern times:—

The Prophecy.

"Whether working through many souls or alone. I seriously promise to infuse true life and dispel darkness and weakness from India within ten years, and within the first half of the twentieth century India will be restored to more than its original glory—Let these words be recorded."

Swami Rama's towering intellect was characterised by bold and independent thinking. He did not teach anything on which he did not bestow his serious thought and did not see its working in his own life. He believed in what he used to call "Experimental Reli-

gion." According to Swami Rama the inner religion of a man must be entirely personal to himself through self-realisation, in which there is no place for external authority. He believed in testing each truth in one's own life, and said that there was no royal road to realisation nor was it possible to make one. With him the method was one of no consequence—to quote his words: "Everyone must go to God through failure and success of his own. Life itself is the greatest revelation."

Everything Divine.

To Swami Rama everything was Divine. The Swami was very courteous and polite to the meanest; he worshipped man as God-incarnate. To Swami Rama the meanest sinner is the highest saint in the making and his manner and behaviour were to Swami acts of worship. Swami Rama's idolatry consisted in loving man, in whom he saw the embodied Brahman, whose worship he considered to be the essential counterpart of the worship of the unmanifested.

After spending two years in the Himalayas Swami Rama was filled with the spirit of

sharing the joy he had found himself and came down to the plains to broadcast it. In 1903 he sailed for Japan where he spent only a fortnight, giving his message and attracting vast audiences. Swami Rama left Japan for San Francisco in November 1903 and stayed for two years in America, leaving a lasting impression on the Americans by his teachings and the extremely simple life he led amidst them. In reply to a questionnaire there he said: "I live in tune with the Infinite; I find there is someone to feed me when I am hungry and someone to give me water when I am thirsty. I need nothing more. I never had any difficulty."

Powers of Eloquence.

Swami Rama was gifted with wonderful powers of eloquence, by means of which he conveyed his message to the people. When it was proposed to confer an Honorary Degree of Doctorate on him for his lectures in one of the Californian Universities, he thankfully declined the honour.

Swami Rama returned to India in 1905, visiting Egypt on his way and delivering lecture

there. When one of the Benares Pandits remarked that he could not be an 'Acharya' without being a master of Sanskrit literature, he took seriously to the study of Sanskrit and very soon became a Master Mind in interpreting the 'Vedic' Texts. This led him to feel that there is a good deal of text torturing now-a-days and said that if the 'Vedas' are to live, they will require an up-to-date interpretation just as the Bible has undergone various interpretations from age to age. Swami Rama valued the 'Vedas' as the treasure-houses of Spiritual Truth.

Swami Rama's brief but bright saintly career of great promise was cut short while bathing in the Ganges near Tehri Garhwal. He was accidentally drowned in the year 1906, at an early age of thirty-three. The Swami's farewell message in Urdu a few hours before his passing is of much interest.

Short as his life was, Swami Rama left a great spiritual legacy and tried to wake up India from her spiritual slumber so that she may once again live up to the 'Dharma' which, to this day, is the admiration of the

whole world. He asked the orthodox Pandits to interpret and practise the 'Shastras' aright, to relax the stringent caste distinctions and rouse national fellow-feeling. The Swami urged that we have to arouse in the people of India a great spirit of fellow-feeling—appreciation—not criticism, the noble sentiment of fraternity, the instinct of synthesis, the co-ordination of the functions of the Aristocracy and of Labour. Swami Rama urged that we should rise above names and forms, but not be misled by them. Everything was to be taken according to its merit. The Swami warned the people not to accept a religion because it is old or because it is the latest, or because it comes from a great ascetic, or because it was patronised by Kings and Princes. To quote him, "Examine it yourself, sift it. Sell not your liberty to Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, or Krishna—Truth is nobody's property—it is everybody's."

A Practical Religion.

Swami Rama taught a simple and practical religion which is found in the streets, a religion which concerns one's business and bosom, a religion which one has not

to practise by going to a particular Church only, religion which one has to practise and live in one's daily life. It does not matter by what name it is called.

Swami Rama defined the essentials of success as fearlessness, work for its own sake, sacrifice and self-trust. The Swami constantly repeated in his lectures "be fearless and none can harm you." According to him work is the most effective and the best cure for all sorts of distractions, passions and temptations. It is a kind of unconscious realisation that keeps us pure and untainted. The positive joy which accompanies faithful work is its highest reward. By sacrifice Swami Rama means the crucifying of the little self, or in other words renunciation, which need not necessarily be asceticism. Swami Rama asked everyone to trust themselves to believe in their innate powers, the indwelling Divinity and not to call themselves miserable sinners or wretches. To him all men and things are Divine.

It might be mentioned here that the two fundamental principles which aided Swami

Rama to rise to the highest God-realisation were "Tattvam Asi" (Thou art That) and "Ekamaivadvitiam" (One without a second). There was nothing new in his teachings except the way in which he emphasised the old truths by calling man to rise from discord to 'harmony,' from difference to 'agreement-in-difference from self to 'the self-in-all', from diversity to 'unity and diversity,' from hatred to 'love', from war to 'peace'.

Let not India lose sight of Swami Rama's teachings in the solution of the various problems that are challenging her to-day !

H. Shrinivas.

Swami Rama as a poet monk

By S. Puran Singh.

What can be the materials for the biography of a man who was silent on the secret of his joyous life like a lotus that springs up from its humble hidden birth-place, and bursts forth into the glory of its own blossom? And what can be his biography but that whoever happened to see him, a flower amongst men, stood for a while, looking at him, and having looked at him full, went past him, deeply suspecting the existence of golden lands beyond this physical life, whose mystic glimpses shone on his smiling face. This full blown lotus refused to give any further details of the story of his life, though much to the agitation of many a soul, he kept on flaunting the perfume of his soul in air.

Swami Rama was essentially an apostle of the life of the spirit, whose daily food was the *Smaran* of the name of God—Om. All who knew him saw that he was one who had lost himself in the Lord. His repetition of this spiritual Mantram sounded like a river

of song flowing out of him. It is written that this *Smāraṇ* is assuredly a sign of inspiration: it is God's favour. Swami Rama had completely disentangled himself from the meshes of the world-net and soared like a bird in the higher skies.

A rough pencil-sketch of this inspired personality with whom I first came in contact at Tokyo is given in the "Story of Rama" in the form of impressions, as it is evidently impossible to trace an authentic history of the development of his mind and his secret love-making with Krishna, God.

It was quite natural for him to rise to the heights of love and call to himself all so feelingly—"I am He," "I am God". But this call in his case was more devotional than philosophical. The stormy passion of Swami Rama, his tears of ecstasy, his poetic joys with beauty, his lyrical realisation of unity with the people who came around him, his broad human sympathy,—were all quite different from the dry, academic, wooden, unmoving, rigid indifference of a Vedantic philosopher; his little heart beat in harmony

with the rhythm of life itself and the sorrow and joy alike of humanity were his own.

One who would look more closely into his Writings would find that the term "Vedanta" as used by Swami Rama has a meaning different from what is generally given to it; it is more or less his own devotion to Krishna or God-Self, blazing up into songs of pantheistic colour. The spirit of his Vedanta, however, was fed by the spirit of the Punjab of Guru Gobind Singh, and further strengthened by the songs of self-affirmation of the adepts like Shams Tabrez and other Persian Masters. All that contributed to the continuous burning of the inner flame of his divine life, he made his own. He used the literature of the whole world—East and West—for winning the inner freedom for himself. His "*Aliph*" an Urdu periodical that he issued from Lahore, was the chief vehicle of his rhapsodic writings in which he set in his gem-like collections from Persian, Punjabee, English and Sanskrit literatures. It is the characteristic symbol of his all-embracing mind, his keen feeling of oneness with the past and the future.

He sinks his sentences into tears. He drowns his thoughts in ecstatic cries. He disarms criticism by tenderly diffusing himself into the being of his critic. He wins his enemies by a song of love in which he calls him *his own self*. He enchants the very air around himself with his bird-like speech that was all poetry, all music. His body was a lake which trembled seeing the Sun enter into its depths. He confounds logic by his divine madness. He contradicts himself in a thousand ways in his self-intoxication which alone is both his creed and religion.

His overstrung emphasis on the idea—"I am God" at times jars on one's ears, introduced as it is so abruptly into a charming atmosphere of love-making with gods. In one sentence he asks us to love God, and in the next he suddenly throws out the effigy of "God" from the idol-worshippers' temple and sets himself in God's place. It is difficult to follow him, for one needs the madness of his joy, his glowing passion and his inspiration to rise above all imperfections of all such expressions of the Inexpressible.

He is concerned with the joy of it all,

with being God and with nothing else. No doubt, this man tried to give the secret of his success, but whatever he wished to say was blown away like a dry autumn leaf in the tempest of his own bosom and he ended in screams and cries. A truly eloquent apostle of the Life of the Spirit! He pitched himself against the half-life of disbelief and fear. He said, "I see fractions of men, not men. I wish men were whole. Wholeness is holiness."

As a student he worked against stupendous odds with the will of a conqueror, with the devotion of a *satee*-woman and with the labour of a galley-slave. Though hungry he would rather deny himself an extra loaf of bread and buy instead more oil for his midnight lamp. And for years, his hunger for knowledge was divine.

As a poet he ran wild and naked with the joy of his feelings as he saw them welling up, swallowing in silence the glory of the pure. He would bare his body and lie senseless in the open for hours to be bathed by the Sun, to be wiped by the winds. He lived

with the poetic spirit of Nature, and he was on terms of great intimacy with her. He would not sit to shape his gold or set his gems or polish his rubies into any complex work of art. It seems, his thought and feelings in their original shape and colour, had in them the perfection of soul. Never mind the outward forms! His art was simple; it concerned itself with the creation of joy within himself and in others. With Hafiz and Omar Khayam he sat in the Sacred Tavern of his brother-mystics drinking cups of wine one after another. Tipsy and self-oblivious he went searching for God everywhere!

On his return from America, he tried to see things somewhat in the new-learnt fashion of that country, chiselling his sentences and speeches, improving the mechanics of his language and thought, thereby virtually modifying his inspiration. The bliss of soul rises always like a sea, in its tempest all mechanical calculations are confounded. His main theme was the actual creation of joy for himself and for distribution. Alas, if he took to writing essays! One would

have loved to see the Swami as he glowed supreme in his own inner joy rising above both man and nature; to see such a man doing something mechanical is nothing short of the disaster of an extraordinary personality that one rarely sees in men like Swami Rama. His address "Secret of Success" reproduced in the "Story" has in its naive simplicity a divine correspondence with the exaltation of his mind as he first descended from the glaciers of the Himalayas to the plains at Lucknow, while his "Law of Crucifixion" (written after his return from America) has in it the odour of the sublime depression that comes to people like him when they see humanity madly rushing out of self in search of joy, though in the purity of his joy there was really no room for the sadness of self-crucifixion!

Some of his selections from the literatures of the East and the West as in *Aliph* and of his letters to one Dhanna Bhagat of Gujranwala, a guide and friend of his when he was yet in his teens, and other notes left by him are at places given *in extenso* in the "Story" as the best autobiographical notes of

such as he. (His true biography is in his actions on the mental plane.

His letters throw a flood of light on the hopes and aspirations of the Punjabi students in those times. Also, a side-light leads one to the blind end of the stone wall which usually meets the Indian graduates after they leave their College. How difficult indeed must it have been for others (and it is still so) when a brilliant graduate like Swami Rama had to be driven from pillar to post for a job in those days when the Universities were not half so busy as now in minting a certain brand of graduates. To rise to an Extra Assistant Commissionership, a low, stupid Government post, was the height of the ambition of the Punjabi young man then, and is perhaps more or less the same even now. But we find Swami Rama so loved his pet subject—Mathematics—that even at the invitation of his Professors he could not forego the profession of a teacher and a missionary for the mere shadows of the false dignity of Government service. This fervent spirit of teaching what he had learnt is remarkable and it exhibited itself involuntarily throughout his meteoric career.

His singular devotion to this little Dhanna of Gujranwala who did, in some measure, help him when he was a student in the High School, shows the great discipline that was in him. Unruffled, unvexed under various physical and mental strains, self-sacrifice is his one solution for every difficulty. To think of God and to meet Him in everything and in every man is his faith and worship.

We see his extraordinary fondness of solitude and hard incessant work. And how disappointing in those days, to him, was the empty-hearted show of welcome on the part of the meaningless crowds of Lahore, who vied with each other in honouring Dada Bhai Naoroji! And how senseless sounded the jingle of political orations of the denationalized Congressmen of those days to this humble boy of Lahore clad in simple *khaddar* ! And living on a few annas a day, sometimes on only one anna a day!

Swami Rama educated himself into a free man, while all others here in this country go the way of slavery. The colleges

in India are breeding houses for slaves whose ambition of Government service ends in the unavoidable national vice of being slaves. Here was a young Punjabi, a free man, who was welcomed and honoured in Japan and America wherever he went, as an equal brother of all. Everywhere thousands listened to him with a respect worthy of a living sage of ancient India. He is one of those few rare Indians who have worked and served to raise the ideals of their race in the estimation of the world of to-day. He struck Professor Taka Kussu of Tokio as a true Indian Yogi who explained both Buddhism and Vedanta in his person. He struck Professor James of America as a spiritual genius who lived in a centre outside his body.

In this idle country where the mind is not at rest, where the hands are not at incessant work, where religion is superstition, where religious practice is barren ritual, where racial pride dwells still in self-flattery of a spiritual glory that belonged to its ancestors long dead, where the mind indolently thinks more of the past than of the future,

Swami Rama comes next to Swami Vivekananda in reminding the people of India to rise from empty idle dreams and take to incessant work to win the freedom which is the fruit not of conquest over others but over one's self.

Om! om! om!

Swami Rama Tirtha : Another Appreciation

By Rev. C. F. Andrews.

The name of Swami Rama is one that I have learnt to honour through long residence in the Punjab, where his chief inspiration is still to be found. In the United Provinces, also, his influence has spread far and wide. Again and again, I have seen faces light up at the mention of his name. Educated men and women in North India have told me how much they owed to him.

He came at a time when a deep unsettlement was disturbing the minds of educated Indians with regard to religious truth; when the outer claims of the material world were becoming almost too absorbing. The training in the western sciences given in Indian Universities, divorced as it usually is from any religious culture, had frequently led to an indifference to religion altogether. After college days, the modern students' struggle for existence in the world had left little opportunity for the cultivation of the inner spirit. A concentration of the mind on worldly success had gathered round advan-

ced education. The strain of being obliged to live at a more expensive standard was often itself the cause of the spiritual life being neglected, until it suffered from atrophy.

Into such an atmosphere of getting and spending and wasting all our powers Swami Rama's unworldly spirit came with a message that commanded attention by its very contrast. No one could be long in his presence without feeling that the highest happiness in life was to be found, not in the things of the body, but in the things of the Soul. He seemed, from his earliest childhood, to have grown up instinctively with a realization of the spiritual realities. Every instinct in his nature pressed him forward to the devout, religious life. Many of those, with whom I have conversed about him, have told me of the innate spiritual power which he possessed,—a power which moved them profoundly whenever they met him personally and talked with him. His very presence was able to take their thoughts away from material things. made them feel, if only for the moment, the reality of spiritual experience.

The published writings of Swami Rama Tirtha show clearly the inner secret of his great personal influence. There is a unique childlike simplicity in what he writes, and overflowing joy and happiness, won through self-discipline and suffering. These qualities reveal a soul that is at peace within itself and has found a priceless treasure that it desires to impart to others. There is a striking personality behind his writings which makes itself felt in his language and mode of address. On every page we find a definite refusal to appeal to those lower motives that are ordinarily urged upon man, as making for success in life, and a determination to find in the Soul itself, apart from all outward circumstances the secret of all true and lasting joy and happiness.

The lectures that have been published have not had the revision of the author himself. He would have corrected the metrical form of some of his poems, which have clearly been put down on paper just as the inspiration to write came to him, without any laboured correction. But while there is certain loss to the reader on this account, there is also an advantage. For what is lost in

correctness is gained in freshness. I cannot doubt that the friends of the author were right in tenderly and piously preserving every word of the manuscript before them. The readers will gladly make allowance for repetition and lack of finish, when the individuality of the Swami himself is brought so vividly before them. We feel the Swami himself present in his own words, and can almost picture him writing and speaking,—with a smile of happiness always on his face.

If I were asked to point out what I consider to be the special characteristics that mark out Swami Rama Tirtha's writings, I should mention first of all the point I have already emphasised, namely, the unworldliness that is every-where apparent. Wealth, riches, luxuries, these are all laid aside without a murmur. Swami's own life had reached a calm heaven, into which the stormy passions that are roused by the acquisition of wealth and worldly honours had never come. His inner life had been free from such things. He is such a child that he cannot even understand them. This child nature seems to come out in him as he speaks of them.

He smiles at them with almost boyish amusement from his own retreat, or mocks at them with a gentle irony. His laughter appears most of all in his poems.

In the second place, I would mention his overflowing charity. He tries to win men, not to drive them; to make the best of them, not to blame them; to attract them, not to argue with them. The bitter and rancorous spirit is remarkably absent; and the tolerant spirit prevails. This is especially noticeable when he is dealing with religious beliefs other than his own. Here he is always courteous and sympathetic. He is the perfect gentleman in such matters.

Usually his one attempt is to absorb and assimilate all that he can approve in the religion of another; his one desire is to try to mould it into his own system of religious thought. In this respect, he shows the truly catholic spirit. For he has a very large share of that charity which 'thinketh no evil' and 'rejoiceth with the truth.'

The third feature that I should wish to notice in the life and writings of the Swami is abounding joy. He was not in the least

one of those gloomy ascetics, who seem to have left behind them all human happiness. He knew what physical hardship meant, in a way that few can have experienced. But this did not embitter him, or make his central message one of harshness. On the contrary, the very titles of his lectures are sufficient to give a picture of the character of his own mind. "Happiness Within," "How to Make Your Homes Happy"—such are the subjects that appeal to him; and his heart goes out as he tries to make his joyous message clear. It is the record of his own experience, not that of another. He is full of happiness in himself, which he wishes to impart to the world; and he is never so joyous in spirit as when "Happiness" is his subject. It is this also, which bubbles over in his poems, waking in others an echo of his own laughter. The outward setting of these poems, as I have already said, may often be crude, but the inner spirit is caught by the sympathetic reader beneath the imperfect vehicle of expression. The message of this gay spirit, this 'troubadour' of divine song, laughing at hardship and smiling at pain, is one that the world sorely needs.

This mention of his poems leads me on to one further feature which I would wish to mention. I do so with diffidence, as it is quite possible that others may take a different view to my own. But what I would venture to say is briefly this, that I find in Swami Rama Tirtha's *poetic* spirit, which lies beyond his own philosophy, the highest value of his written work. In this seems to lie its freshness, its originality, its contribution to the world of thought. His romantic love of Nature, strong in his life as in his death; his passion for sacrifice and renunciation; his eager thirst for reality and self-abandonment in search of truth; his joy and laughter in the victory he had won, are the true emblems of his inner poetic spirit. They go beyond the philosopher and reveal his true personality. It is the presence of these qualities which make him break out into song. To these qualities my own heart goes out most warmly in response. On these sides I find by far the strongest attraction of the writer.

With the full philosophy of the Advaita Vedanta, as it is often stated in the writings-

of Swami Rama, I have not come to an agreement. Rightly or wrongly, it seems to me a short cut in trying to solve the problem of existence.—a solution which has overlooked certain persistent facts of human experience. I am always conscious of obstinate and irreducible elements in the equation of God, the Soul, and the Universe, which the Advaita system does not seem seriously to take into account. I would refer for an instance, in Swami Rama Tirtha's book, to the chapter on the 'Prognosis and Diagnosis of Sin.' While containing some valuable thoughts, this chapter appears to be unsatisfying in its conclusions, intended as they are to form a final answer to the problems of the origin of evil.

But, on the other hand, with the poetic spirit of Swami Rama where his thought is still in solution, and not crystallised into a formal logical system, I have a deep sympathy. Here I feel again on common ground, and my whole heart goes out to the young writer in his beautiful passages, on renunciation as the Law of Life Eternal; or again in his vivid appreciation of beauty in nature; or

again, to mention only one more instance, in his pure ideal of married life. The same sympathy rises within me as when I read some of the poetry of the Upanishads, or certain passages from that greatest of all Sanskrit poems, the Bhagavad Gita. There also the note is struck, which is heard many times in Swami Rama's writings, that only in the silence of the soul can the divine harmony of the Universe be heard.

The spirit of Wordsworth, among the English poets, appears to me very near akin to the heart of Swami Rama Tirtha. In Swamiji's love of Nature, I can well imagine him, during his later days of wandering among the Himalayan mountains, echoing Wordsworth's great sonorous lines :—

I have learned

To look on Nature, not as in the hour,
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-
times

The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample-
power.

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy

Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean, and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

I can imagine him also declaring himself
 an adherent of Wordsworth's own majestic
 creed :

Therefore am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From the green earth; of all the mighty
 world.

Of eye and ear both what they half create,
 And what perceive.

I have not been afraid to quote this famous
 passage almost at full length, even though it
 is so well known to every lover of English
 literature, and so very often quoted. For it
 is, I believe, the *poetry* of the West, rather
 than its philosophy,—especially the poetry of
 that wonderful 'Revolution Period' in English
 Literature,—which comes nearest to India's
 heart.

In the same way, I venture to believe, it
 will be the poets of Modern India, as they

seek to bring their spiritual instinct of the past into living touch with the new movements of the age, who will come nearest to the heart of the West. Amongst these poets of modern India, I would reckon that remarkable company of religious leaders, who have appeared in different parts of the country, during the last century, among whom Swami Rama's tender spirit showed such early promise of fulfilment.

In this approximation between India and the West, there will remain much that the West is not likely in the end to adopt. But there will be much on the other hand, that will throw light on cherished and familiar religious truths giving them a new setting.

I cannot refrain, in this connexion, from quoting a passage from Swami Rama's lectures, which may illustrate my meaning:

'In the Lord's Prayer,' he writes, 'We say, 'Give us this day our daily bread, and in another place we say, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.' Reconcile these statements; understand them thoroughly. The meaning of that Lord's Prayer, when it was stated,

‘Give us this day our daily bread,’ is not that you should be craving, willing and wishing: not at all. This is not the meaning. The meaning is that even a king, an emperor, who is in no danger of not having his daily bread, even a prince, who is sure that his daily bread is guaranteed to him,—even he is to offer that prayer. If so, evidently, ‘Give us this day our daily bread’ does not mean that they should put themselves in the begging mood; that they should ask for material prosperity; it does not mean that. The prayer means that every body, let him be a prince, a king, a monk, anybody, is to look upon all these things around him, all the wealth and plenty, all the riches, all the beautiful and attractive objects, as not his, as not belonging to him, but as God’s,—not mine, not mine, but God’s,—That does not mean begging, but renouncing; giving up; renouncing unto God. You know how unreasonable it is, on the part of a king to offer that prayer, ‘Give us this day our daily bread,’ if it be taken in its ordinary sense. How unreasonable! But it becomes reasonable enough, when the king, while he is offering that prayer puts himself into the mood,

where all the jewels in his treasury, all the riches in his house, the house itself,—all these he renounces, as it were, he gives them up, he disclaims them. He breaks connection with them, so to say; and he stands apart from them. He is the monk of monks. He says, 'This is God's: table, everything lying upon the table, is His, not mine; I do not possess anything that comes to me, comes from my Beloved One.'

Such a passage as this gives, on the one hand, an example of Swami Rama's style, so simple, so direct, so careless with regard to repetition, if only the meaning can be made clear; and, on the other hand, it explains what I have called the approximation of two different streams of human thought, issuing from two different springs. These, in their conjunction, should do very much indeed to fertilize the soil in which man's life is sown.

Eastern and Western conceptions of spiritual life are flowing forward to day, like two great rivers which come from different sources. We need the poet thinkers, both in the West and in the East, who may be able to cut new channel from one river of human

experience to another. In this way, the soil of human life will be enriched, and its fertile area enlarged.

Among the different intersecting channels of new thought, which are being cut, three appear to me to be of special significance:—

(1) There is the approach made by the West towards the East, in what Tennyson has called 'the Higher Pantheism.'

The sun, the moon, the stars,
the seas, the hills and plains,

Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of
Him who reigns?

Is not the Vision He? Though He
be not that which he seems,

Dreams are true while they last;
and do not we live in dreams?

As we read many passages in modern English poetry, we feel as though we were back in the Upanishads, repeating Indian thoughts uttered long centuries ago.

(2) Along with this conception of an all-pervading Divine Nature, there has developed

in the West, even more clearly and distinctly in modern times, the conception of an eternally persisting personality.

Dark is the world to thee? Thyself
art the reason why :

For is He not all but that, which
has power to say 'I am I?'

But in its negative aspect, the loss of personal identity, or complete absorption, as the final end of the soul, is a conception, which the poets of the West have never willingly accepted. This forms one of the main themes of 'In Memoriam.' I would quote the following lines :

That each, who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall,
Remerging in the general soul,
Is faith as vague as all unsweet.
Eternal Form shall still divide.
The eternal soul from all besides,
And I shall know him when we meet.

So the poet sings of his dead friend, again and again in more passionate accents at the close :

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire
 So far, so near, in woe and weal,
 O loved the most, when most I feel
 There is a lower and a higher :
 Known and unknown, human, divine:
 Sweet human hand, and lips, and eye:
 Dear human friend, that cannot die,
 Mine, mine, for ever, ever mine.

Thus the modern West to-day expresses
 the conviction, which for century after cen-
 tury it has cherished, that love is eternal,
 individual existence through the medium of
 Love.

Love is and was my king and Lord,
 And will be though as yet I keep,
 Within his court on earth, and sleep
 Encompassed by his faithful guard,
 And hear at times a sentinel,
 Who moves about from place to place,
 And whispers to the worlds of space,
 In the deep night, that all is well.

It is again this central conviction of the
 eternity and ultimate reality of Love, involv-
 ing both personal union and personal distinc-
 tion between subject and object, that forms

the burden of the poetry of Browning, the most virile and forceful of modern English Poets.

For Life, with all its yield of joy and woe,
And hope and fear,—believe the aged
friend—

Is just our chance o' the prize of learning
Love,

How Love might be, hath been indeed
and is.

There is a certain real danger in this emphasis on personality in the West, in its individual forms even when thus closely associated with the highest ideal of Love. For Love itself may become too individual and possessive. It may lead to a subtle self-assertion and to an individualism of a selfish type. But one thing is certain, the West will never accept as finally satisfying any philosophy, which does not allow it to hold the faith that love between human souls may be an eternal reality.

(3) There is a remarkable approach made from the side of the East in what both Swami

Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirtha have made familiar by the name of 'Practical Vedanta—the approximation of the modern Vedanta to Christian philanthropy in its social and national applications. Here again, the approach may well have its limits, and the social and national development of the East may differ both in kind and in degree from that of Europe, with its own religious discipline of nearly two thousand years.

I do not wish it to be understood that this religious contact between East and West is always conscious and deliberate. On the contrary, from both sides, it appears still to be almost unconscious,—a mingling of two atmospheres rather than the conscious acceptance of any new definitions. Many would repudiate the idea that approximation as yet existed. But those who look beneath the surface, and have watched the trend of thought, both in the East and in the West, tell us clearly that an intermingling is actually taking place, not from one side only, but with mutual advantage.

It is because Swami Rama Tirtha was so singularly fitted to make some of these advan-

ces, that I regard his published works, and the tradition he has left behind, to be of true historic value. Therefore I would wish to do all in my power to keep his memory fresh and green. Such a saintly personality should be an inspiration both to those of the older generation who knew and loved him and also to the younger student life of India, which has grown up since he passed away.

‘Prabuddha Bharat’

1767/

the terrific bugbear of custom would not allow a person to feel for a moment that he is one with the people of the other races. The thought of Brahmanhood or Kshatriya-hood is all the time too emphatically pronounced to allow the feeling of manhood to enter the heart.

"The face of the Earth has changed many times since Manu's days, the rivers have shifted their beds, the wild forests have been hewn and burned, the flora and fauna have varied; the Kshatriya or warrior profession has been in a way entirely swept out of India, and yet the spiritual suicides of India remain up to this day abject slaves to the Caste conventionalities, rites and rules laid down by Manu for his contemporaries. Independant thinking is looked upon as *heresy*, nay, the worst crime. Whatever comes through the dead language is sacred. If your reasoning does not slavishly glorify the freaks and fancies and sayings of the dead, damned are you, everybody will turn right against you. All work is noble, all labour is sacred, but through the perversion of the Caste spirit, honour and disgrace have got attached to outside professions. The people who do not utilize their early age in educating themselves have to redeem their

past idleness by hard manual labour in youth. They pay by the sweat of their brow for their previous laziness. Who are you or I to call their labour menial or to despise the Sudra work ? Is not that kind of labour also just as necessary as the Priest's, the warrior's or the merchant's work ? So low have matters been brought to-day that the people of the lower castes are not allowed to walk in the same street where higher caste men (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, or Vaisyas) pass. They have to live in poor huts outside the respectable villages or towns inhabited by the higher caste men. If the shadow of a man of low caste falls upon a person of high caste, that high caste man will have to wash and bathe in order that he may purify himself. If any thing is touched by a person of low caste, that thing is polluted and corrupted, that thing is not worthy of use for a person of high caste. The low caste men have to live upon the crusts and crumbs given to them by the high caste people in reward for the most trying and menial labour that these low class people perform. You will excuse Rama, if he, in order to lay before you the facts, is obliged to use words which you are not accustomed to hear. These

low caste men, these poor Sudras or Parias have to sweep the streets, to rub and scrub with their hands the dirty gutters, yes, not only that, they have to clean the water closets, and as a reward for that labour, they are given stale crumbs and crusts. They cannot be rich; they are exceedingly poor. Rama's heart aches when thinking of their state. The low caste children cannot enter the schools where higher caste boys receive education; because of their sitting there those high caste boys will be defiled. How can these down-trodden people receive any education? These people live from hand to mouth; they are dying every day. India is a favourite haunt of all kinds of plague and disease, and these poor Sudras, living in unhealthy quarters, are the most hospitable to all sorts of maladies and contagions. They generously invite choleras, plagues and famines to feed voluptuously on their bodies. The poor, the low are always the feet, base or support of Society. The overbearing Society which obstructs and stunts the growth of the lower castes, the Society that maltreats and denies education to the poor ignorant sinners, that society cuts down its own feet, that society must crumble.

down.

"Most of these low caste men were the aboriginal inhabitants of India. The Aryans, whom you call Hindus to-day, conquered the aborigines of India and then they subjected them to this most menial, abject degradation. They reduced them to this state of misery. They committed a crime, and they sowed what they are reaping to-day. The Hindus or the Aryans sowed, in their treatment of the aboriginal inhabitants of India, what they are reaping at the hands of the Muhammadans, and at the hands of the English who are ruling India to-day. This is the *law of Karma* or *Compensation*."

* * * *

Reading these thoughts we cannot but hold our tongues and make our hearts inert. With feelings of shame and repentance mixed with a heart-burning sigh, we are forced to say that we should do our best to efface the national stigma—for which Swami Rama shed his tears in America—from the forehead of Mother India. Then, and then alone, the Bharat Mata will be able to awaken the whole world to move in the right direction by her bold preachings of the

Practical Vedanta.

CHANDRIKA PRASAD JIGYASU,

FOUNDER

Hindu Social Reform office,

Saadatganj Road, Lucknow.



private coaching class, even that did not prosper well in the end. Such were the circumstances the soul of Rama had had to combat but it remained unruffled, and in the end succeeded against them all and produced ever lasting treasure for posterity. I have not stressed teachings, deep and illuminating as as they are, but the facts of his life for the particular reason, that those teachings were the outcome of his life. Swami Rama died young and youngmen of India and the world should take him as their model and if they do so it would be to the effective betterment of whole humanity, nay to the betterment of whole creation.

Girdhar Gopal Saxena

M. A. (Phil. His. & Econ.)

Reminiscence.

by

Dr. Gokul Chand Narang

It gives me pleasure to state that Swami Rama Tirtha belonged to my district and was educated in the same school from which I passed my Matriculation examination a few years after him. I was also pleased to find that when I opened *Khatut-e-Rama*, an Urdu volume containing 1124 letters of Swami Rama Tirtha I found my own village Baddoki mentioned in the very first letter dated 24th of May, 1886.

Rama, as he chose to call himself later, probably as the result of 'self-realization' was born in Muraliwala, a village near Gujranwala on the Diwali night in Samvat 1930, 1873 A. D. After passing the primary examination from his village school he joined the U. P. Mission School at Gujranwala. After passing his Matriculation from this School in 1888 he joined the Forman Christian College at Lahore and passed his M. A. from there in 1895 in Mathematics. Not being flush of money he had to look around for a

job. He was exceptionally brilliant in Mathematics and he advertised by means of posters that he would coach F. A. and B. A. students in that subject provided that he could get least ten students willing to pay Rs. 10 and Rs. 15 p. m. respectively. The response was not at all encouraging. Then he cast about to find a job in some School or College until in September 1895 he got a job at Sialkot. He worked there till the end of April, 1896, when he was appointed senior Professor of Mathematics in the F. C. College. His reputation was so high as a Mathematician that, as stated in his letter of the 3rd of May, 1896 "all the students who joined the third year class took Mathematics". He worked in this College for about two years and left it because by that time he had decided to renounce the world.

The fact is that while he was still a school boy at Gujranwala he came under the influence of one Bhakta Dhanna Ram, a well known Vedantist. I had the privilege of meeting this gentleman when I was reading in the M. B. School at Gujranwala. He was a stoutish gentleman, then of middle age,

looking very calm and contented. The Gujranwala people had given him the nickname of "*Rab*", i. e. God, because he was a staunch Vedantist and like all Advait. Pantheists he believed in the literal interpretation of *Aham Brahmasmi*, 'I am God'. He had, however, firm faith in Monism and stuck to it till the end. To the best of my recollection and information Dhanna Ram had no family of his own and left whatever he had in trust for chaitable purposes including the printing and publication of Rama's letters.

He had apparently visualized the future greatness of his pupil as otherwise he would not have preserved 1124 letters received by him from Rama Tirtha as most of the letters are common place and many of them written on post cards. Rama Tirtha from his very childhood had shown a great leaning towards Vedantism and his attitude towards worldly affairs was very much like that of an ascetic notwithstanding the fact that he was poor and had to make efforts for a living and devote all the attention that was necessary to do his duty as a teacher while in service both at Sialkot and Forman Christian College

at Lahore. His letters show a gradual deterioration of his attitude from a worldly point of view and ever increasing bias towards religion. While writing to his father who had probably asked for some money he wrote in October, 1897 "your kind letter has arrived and given great pleasure. The body of your son, Tirtha Rama has been sold. It has been sold to Rama. He has now no claim on it. Today on the night of the Diwali he has lost his body but has won God; you must be congratulated. Now whatever you want you should take it from my Master. He will surely give you or will send it to you through me. You should, however, for once ask Him with implicit faith. Since 19 or 20 days, He is doing all my work with diligence. Why should not He do yours. Don't you get upset. God is the only wealth of us *Goswamis*. It is not proper to run after worldly shells leaving the true and valuable wealth of inner satisfaction. Try to enjoy the pleasures of the real wealth, i. e., self-realization."

On receipt of this letter Rama's father sent it over to Dhanna Ram with the remark,

"we had entrusted our boy to your wise care but the result has been that he has been lost to the family.....".

During the period of his employment as teacher and professor he was contacting *Sannyasis* and *Sadhus* and was also delivering lectures on his favourite subject of Vedanta. In November 1897 when Vivekananda visited Lahore he heard his lectures and in one of his letters he has referred to him and has paid a compliment to his learning and ability. His periods of self-realization and consequent "intoxication" went on increasing so much so that he wrote in December the same year. "I am always in a state of such intoxication that I cannot even devote myself to the study of books". He never forgot his old almost illiterate Guru and frequently referred to the favours which Dhanna Ram had bestowed upon him in the form of spiritual instruction. In another letter to his Guru written on the 'Xmas day he reiterates his homage and says, "it is all due to you that I am having daily baths in the sea of happiness. I have become one with you." and he quotes the well known

Persian verse *Man Tu Shudam*, etc. meaning I have become Thou and Thou hast become I. I am the body and Thou art the soul so that nobody might say after this that I am different from Thee. He was still working in the Forman Christian College but his heart was no longer in the world and time was approaching for him to discard everything and this is what he did towards the end of 1898.

After giving up the College he devoted himself to the intense study and practice of Vedanta. He must have been influenced by the reports of Vivekananda's success in America and of the popularity of Rama Krishna Mission in that continent. As his views almost entirely coincided with those of Vivekananda and his colleagues, he was tempted and persuaded to follow their example and advance the cause of Hinduism in America and other foreign countries. Accordingly he went to America in 1903. His entry into America was dramatic. His boat reached San Francisco at the close of the year 1903. As the steamer reached the harbour he was standing on deck, calm and

luminous, in his flame-coloured robe amid the surrounding hustle and bustle of landing. No one would have taken him for the university professor he was, a teacher of Mathematics.

"Where is your luggage?" inquired an American fellow-passenger.

"Rama keeps as much as he can carry himself" was the serene reply.

"Have you any money?"

"No."

"Are you landing here?"

"Yes."

"Then you must have some friend to help you."

"Yes, there is one."

"Who is he?"

"You" breathed Rama, touching his companion's shoulder.

An electric touch that produced results! This man took care of the Swami during his whole stay in America and later wrote of him. "He is a torch of knowledge hailing

from the Himalays. Fire cannot burn him, steel cannot cut him. Tears of ecstasy flow from his eyes, and his very presence gives new life."

Such was Swami Rama. His message was simple, but deep, for his soul was fed by Christian love and service as well as by the Hindu feeling and conviction, "I am God" In Forman Christian College, Lahore, he consumed his body at the altar of western learning, and then grew strong and robust on the diet of vedanta assurance and yoga body building. To India his message was patriotism and reason, the abolition of caste and the adoption of modern education.

"Accept not a religion because it is the oldest.... The latest innovation, if it can stand the test of reason, is as good as the fresh rose, bedecked with sparkling dew....

"Accept a religion on its own merits. Examine it yourself. Sift it.

"Renunciation does not require you to go into the forests.... to strip yourself of all clothing... To realize God, have the Sannyasa-

spirit i. e. renunciation of self-interest, making the little self absolutely one with the great self of Mother India.

"To America his message was peace, and confidence in the self as God. It is useless to send Christian missionaries to India, he insisted. Just let the Hindus come to America for modern education and then return.

"Cultivate peace of mind, fill your mind with pure thoughts, and nobody can set himself against you. That is the Law.

"Have you a doubt as to your own Divine Self? You had better put a bullet in your heart than a doubt there. The whole Universe serves one as his body when he feels the Universal Soul as his ever very Self."

He left quite a number of followers in America. His family have preserved in tact the room in which he was born and some of his American disciples have come all the way on pilgrimage to Muraliwala to look at the room as devout Christians would have gone to see the manger in which Jesus was born. A fair is annually held at Muraliwala in Rama's memory and is attended by his admirers from all over the country.

Swami Rama as Apostle of Ecstasy

By Prof. Ram Murti Loomba, M. A.

On Diwali day in 1906 at Simlasu; a sylvan house in Tehri Garhwal, this saint of only thirty-three wrote:—

‘O Death! Take away this body if you please. I have enough of bodies to live in. I can wear those divine silver threads the moonbeams and live in happiness. I shall roam as a divine minstrel singing in the guise of hilly streams and mountain brooks. I shall dance in the robes of the waves of the sea. I am the breeze with proud graceful gait. I am the wind inebriated. My wandering form is ever flowing in steams of change. I came down from yonder hills, raised the dead, knocked at doors, awakened the sleeping, unveiled the fair faces of some and wiped the tears of a few weeping ones. The bulbul and the rose both I saw and I comforted them. I touched this, I touched that, I doff my hat and off I am. Here I go and there I go. I keep nothing with me.’

Swami Rama laid the writing aside, went

into the waters of the Ganga and never came up again.

Spiritual Unity

This last writing not only foreshadowed the end of a great life. It was the consummate expression of a personality at the loftiest cosmic heights of development and expansion, a personality that had broken all shackles and arisen above all limitations, and have realized its spiritual unity with the entire universe, had raised itself to the level of Godhood. Here was complete self-realization bursting forth into the glory and the enthusiasm of its own fulfilment.

He came of a poor Goswami Brahmin family of Muraliwala in the district of Gurdaspur. Motherless, a few days after his birth in 1873, he was brought up on cows milk by his elder brother and an old aunt. He went to school at five and had an exceptionally brilliant student career till twenty-two when he took the M. A. in Mathematics from the Punjab University. This entire period of seventeen years was one of intense personal discipline. Even as a

child he loved solitude and was particularly fond of hearing the conch shell and the sacred recitations in the village temple. Devoted reverence for his teachers was always characteristic of him, but it reached extraordinary depths in his relation with Chhanna Bhagat whom he took for his spiritual master, minister and guide and worshipped as God himself in the classical Indian style. It was at the age of twenty he started speaking of a desire to spend his whole life, every breath of it, in the service of God through man, of religious experiences like the hearing of Anhad Shabda and divine peace or Ananda, and of spiritual and philosophical studies. In the end of 1895 he was appointed Professor of Mathematics in his own College at Lahore. But he soon started speaking of living like an ash-covered Sadhu, dwelling outside his body as the embodiment of Joy Absolute. On his twenty-third birthday he wrote to his father that his body was now sold to God, and that for the previous nineteen or twenty days the Lord had come and taken upon himself all his tasks. Since then he was a completely transformed soul.

living constantly in union with Divinity, refusing to return home and taking more and more to hills and forests. He gave up the Professorship for a Readership in another College requiring only two hours work a day, and started a periodical, *Aliph*, devoted to the propagation of Love of God. In July 1900 he left Lahore for good and retired to the Himalayas. After a year of life there he finally put on the orange robe of the Sanyasi.

Joy of self-realisation

The first year as a monk was spent on the snows of Gangotri, Jamnotri, Kedarnath, and Badri Narayana. From there he came down to the plains full of missionary zeal for sharing with humanity the joys of his self-realization. He presided over a miniature Parliament of Religions at Mathura and at the instance of the Raja of Tehri left for Japan. There he held large audiences spellbound with his fiery spiritualism and his inspired Vedantism. After about a fortnight there he went to America where he stayed for two years electrifying and converting the people of the United States with his

universal love, his deep philosophic insight, his tears of religious ecstasy, his inspired chantings of 'Om', his passionate sense of unity with the Divine and his rising high above all that is worldly. He declined an Honorary Doctorate and cast eulogies on his work and life into the waves of the river Sacramento. He returned to India via Egypt and Persia and lectured at different places in the United Provinces emphasizing the need of organisation in every department and activity of life and the need for united work. But he was yearning to return to the solitude of the mountains and started living at Vyas Ashram a little above Rishikesh. He stayed there for about a year, diving deep into the study of Sanskrit grammar and the Vedic and Vedantic classics in that language. He then moved to Vashishtha Ashram very near Kedarnath.

It was here that the curtain started falling on the career of this apostle of ecstasy. He began to feel a need to dive further still into the depths of self-absorption. He gave up outward manifestations of inspiration. When

he read, his book would drop from his hands, tears would roll down from his eyes and the reading would stop. He gave up long trappings. He abandoned criticism and discussion. He asked his admirer Puran Singh to carry on the work he had himself begun under the guidance henceforth of the inner light alone. He himself, he said, would now become silent and would never speak again. When, after a month's stay at Vashishtha Ashram, he shifted to his last abode at Simlasu, he made even his constant companion and disciple Narayana Swami start living apart independently in a hut on the bank of the sacred Ganga. Six days later he left the plane of earthly existence forever.

All through these phases of his spiritual upsoar, this great religious mystic was also a great patriot. We will content ourselves here by recounting just one incident towards the close of his life. While at Vashishtha Ashram he received a letter from a friend containing a warning that the police were after him and suspected him to be a great nationalist bent on subverting the British Government in India. "Tell them", said

Swami Rama, "I do not defend myself. They may treat me as they like. I cannot be other than what I am. I wish as an Indian that my country should be free."

He was a man of extraordinarily strong resolutions. His student life of extreme poverty, equally hard work and not less intense inner discipline had reduced his body to a skeleton. But he resolved to develop a strong physique. He took regular physical exercises and large quantities of milk. And he emerged a swift walker who could tramp over forty miles a day in the Himalayas.

He had exhibited the same spirit of resolution in his studies at school and college. We are told how he once kept a dagger under his seat and vowed to solve four most abstruse mathematical problems before sunrise or else sever his head from his body. One of the problems remained unsolved when the first streaks of dawn became visible. Rama got up to fulfil his vow and going up to the roof of his house began piercing his throat with the thin sharp point of his dagger. To his surprise, as the blood drops started oozing out, the solution of the problem appeared

before him written, as it were, in letters of light in the air.

An Explosive Personality.

His personality was explosive. It was an explosiveness born of the joy of innocence and risen above the needs of worldly wisdom. Puran Singh tells us how once in Swami Rama's company in Japan he found himself stealing a glance at a row of pretty Japanese ladies with picturesque robes and snowy necks, and half thought in his mind what the Swami would say, if he caught him in the act. Spoke the Swami, as if reading his thoughts. "Puranji ! How this row of necks looks like the silver threads of so many Gangas flowing out of the black tressy rocks!"

He saw in Nature in its myriad forms a Divine beauty that appears not to common eyes. He would go into raptures over them. He would be bathed in tears. He would sing and dance and run in a state of divine madness, full to the brim with the joy of the realization of the fundamental identity of Nature, Self and God.

Swami Rama Tirtha:

As Spiritual Ambassador

Swami Rama was one of the brightest jewels of India's genius. Of the inspired band of Prophets who heralded the dawn of the Indian Renaissance towards the close of the last century, two names stand out in prominence—Swami Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirtha. Both held aloft the same banner of "Vedanta" and proclaimed India's Religious Message in far off lands overseas. Their mission, too, was alike. Both electrified the nation and drove out the lethargy that benumbed the land for centuries. And as ambassadors of the Message of the Spirit across the seas both restored the fallen prestige and ancient glory of the Motherland.

The name of Swami Vivekananda has by now become a household word, but not many have heard of Swami Rama. But that does not in any way diminish the greatness of Swami Rama, it only explains the difference in their personalities. Swami Rama was

more a poet, a nightingale, and avoided lime-light, and preferred to retire in seclusion in the forests.

Swami Rama wrote fearlessly. "Be Fearless" was one of his fundamental teachings.

Swami Rama, previously known as Gosain Tirtha Rama, M.A. was born in 1873, on the day following the "Diwali" (Festival of lights), at Muraliwali, a village in the district of Gujranwala, Punjab, of a poor family of Gosain Brahmins. Some say he was a direct descendant of Tulsi Das, the famous author of the Hindi "Ramayana." Goswami Hirananda, his father, was the spiritual "Guru" of a few Hindu families settled in the North-West Frontier. He eked out a miserable existence. His mother passed away when Rama was but a few days old and was brought up by his elder brother, Gosain Guru Das and his old aunt. Rama was an uncommon child, he was destined to be the coming genius of his race. Rama was brought up in extreme poverty and had to fight against innumerable odds. He had an indomitable

will and inordinate thirst for knowledge and passion for study. Even at an early age he was intensely spiritual and a Saintly Light shone on his face.

His Terrible Privations.

His father could not support him, but thanks to the generosity of Dhanna Mal, he was able to make both ends meet, and passed the Matriculation in 1883. This was in Gujranwala.

Rama then went to Lahore for his Arts Course and joined a Mission College. He worked hard and incessantly, but his privations were terrible—pathetic, such as would make one shed tears! He lived in a wretched hovel invested with scorpions and snakes, had to live on a few pice a day for months on end, with the coarsest of tattered clothes, snatching up his knowledge from borrowed books! He had to starve for days together, and had no oil for his lamp. He bore it up calmly, attended College regularly and brilliantly passed the Intermediate. The same poverty dogged him until he got his B.A. degree, after which he got some scholarships, which eased him until he passed the M.A.

Rama was the victim of early marriage and had the burden of supporting his young wife.

Gosain Tirtha Rama's studies were vast and varied. He was at home with the literature of Eastern and Western Philosophy and the works of Sufi Mystics of Persia besides being proficient in Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi literature. He mastered the "Upanishads" during his college days. He acquired special distinction in Mathematics.

At a very early age Gosain Tirtha Rama had a deep faith in the Divine Dispensation. He declined to go in for the Provincial Civil Service—in other words, he did not want to "sell the harvest of learning" but preferred to "disrtibute it" and became a teacher. Gradually he rose up to be a Professor in a Mission College in Lahore.

Rama did his duties with promptitude and sincerity, but his thoughts were heavenward. While lecturing in the "Dharma Sabhas" (Religious Associations) on the subject of "Bhakti" (Devotion) or about Lord

Krishna, he used to forget himself, in the fullness of the dear associations, and would shed tears of joy. He used to see the glorious vision of the cloud-coloured Krishna with the bamboo flute on his lips, and dancing on the head of a cobra.

Lover Of Science

Rama loved Science, and was an amateur chemist and botanist. He had mastered the "Vedas, Upanishads," and the intricate systems of Hindu Philosophy such as Shankara, Kanad, Kapila, Gautama, Patanjali, Jaimini, as well as Western Kant, Hegel, Goethe, Fichte, Spinoza, Comte, Spencer, Darwin, Haeckel, Tyndal, Huxley, Star, Jordan, &c., &c., besides Urdu, Hindi and Sanskrit Literatures. There was no pedantry and not the slightest shadow of affected pride—he judged impartially, forming his own independent conclusions. In him was a happy blending of a Scholar, Scientist, and Spiritualist in one.

It was at this time that Swami Vivekananda visited Lahore and awakened the Punjab of the Lion-hearted Guru Govind.

As in the rest of India, so in the Punjab, Vivekananda sent an electric thrill in the life breath of the millions through his lectures and discourses. His lecture on Vedanta at Lahore was perhaps the most brilliant piece of his oratory, and naturally fired the heart of many a youth. Gosain Tirtha Rama was completely captivated, and strengthened his silent ambition in the realms of the Spirit. Rama was already evolving within himself, and now made up his mind definitely to retire to the Himalayas. This was in 1900, when he was about 26. So Rama became a Sannyasi.

After wandering for about two years in the forests of Brahmapuri, near Rishikesh, Rama realized his much coveted object—the realization of the self. Swami Rama realized the Great Law that the whole Universe serves one as his body, when one feels the Universal Soul as his very Self. Not only a Spiritualist and a veritable Prince of Oriental dreamers and Yogis, he was also a champion of physical exercise. It might be mentioned that the two fundamen-

tal principles that aided Swami Rama to Self-realisation were: "Tattvam-Asi" (Thou Art That) and "Ekamaivadvitiam" (One without a Second).

A Storm Of Peace

Swami Rama was highly emotional. His deep sincerity, irresistible sweetness and moving sympathy often used to express themselves in tears, while his meditation on the Divine led him into a state of semi-madness or God-intoxication. With all this there was in him the spontaneous joy of a natural man, which sometimes burst out into peals of laughter—a laughter which touched the innermost core of their hearts, making them feel that the Swamiji knew everything of them. Rama's cheerfulness was the natural expression of the relaxation of the presence of the Divine Spirit in everything and in himself. Even in the midst of merriment he would suddenly turn inwards, become silent, and begin to chant the Sacred Syllable "Om." In his own words he was a "storm of peace; a tempest of joy."

It is not easy to give an adequate description of the personality and character of Swami Rama; this has been faithfully port-

rayed by the Poet Puran Singh, a disciple and contemporary of Swami Rama.

According to Puran Singh, Swami Rama's character shone with the gold of all India's past and suggested the rare glory of her nature. To see Rama was to begin one's life anew. All meanness and smallness of spirit vanished in his presence, and human consciousness was lifted up to the ethereal heights of the Divine. New thoughts would dawn on you and new feelings would stir your heart, your sympathies would be enlarged, your mind would feel a fresh breeze flowing towards it, bringing with it a Placid Calm, a Heavenly Beautitude, an Ineffable Peace and Biss, which would make arguments vanish. Swami Rama was always cheerful—a cheerfulness that nothing could mar was his. His smiles were irresistible. Swami Rama was Love Incarnate—he was extremely polite even to the lowly. To him was no high, no low, no animate, no inanimate. Everything seemed to him more than it meant—he even addressed his books, pencils, etc., and worshipped them.

No words could paint the charm of his person—the sight of him drew out all one's Inner Love towards him. His touch roused even in dry hearts the emotions of a poet and clothed the Soul of man in fragrant verdures of Divine Joy—this is true in the case of all Prophets and Seers.

Swami Rama seldom lived in the body consciousness, he little felt he had a body, and indeed it was not possible for his Soul to live long in the limitations of a little frame.

A Universe In Himself.

Swami Rama was a Universe in himself—his cities were made of Light—in his lands Lord Buddha still walked with his begging bowl and Christ still preached the Sermon "Shrutis" and "Smritis," verses and songs, thoughts and things, questions of philosophy and religion, politics and society, all jostled together in his Divine Light, and came out with a refreshing beauty. Any idea, any problem, appeared anew by the "Rama touch." He saw things by the light of his own Soul; there was nothing outside him. He declared that the red rays of the Sun

were his muscles, when anything came across him, he robed it with God, and saw there was nothing else but God.

Here are some of his forceful expressions:—
 "Pattwamasi"—Thou art that." Thou art all thou seest. No power on earth can prevent it, no Kings, Devils, or Gods can withstand it. Inevitable is Truth's order. Faint not, My head is your head; cut it if you please, but a thousand others will grow in its place." In another place he proclaims in ecstasy; "Christians, Hindus, Parsis, Arya Samajists, Sikhs. Mahommelans, all those whose muscles, bones, blood and brain are made by eating the grain and salt of my beloved "Ishta Devi," (favourite Deity) the Bharat Bhumi, are my Brothers, nay, my very self. Tell them I am theirs! I embrace all—I exclude none—I am Love. Love, like Light robes everything and all with splendours of Light. Verily, verily, I am nothing but flood and glory of Love. I love all equally."

Swami Rama has made the following telling prophecy which has a great signifi-

cance in modern times:—“Whether working through many souls, or alone, I seriously promise to infuse true life and dispel darkness and weakness from India within ten years; and within the first half of the twentieth century India will be restored to more than its original glory. Let these words be recorded.

Swami Rama's towering intellect was characterised by bold and independent thinking. He did not teach anything on which he did not bestow his serious attention, and did not see its working in his own life. According to him the inner religion of man must be entirely personal to himself through self-realization, in which there is no place for external authority. To quote him; “Everyone must go to God through failures and successes of his own—life itself is the greatest revelation. Swami Rama exhorted the pandits to interpret the Shastras aright, and to relax the stringent caste restrictions, in the larger interest of national fellow-feeling. Rama urged that an instinct of synthesis may prevail, and a co-ordination of the functions of Aristocracy and Labour, and a spirit of co operation and not competition.

Swami Rama defined the essentials of success as fearlessness, work for its own sake and self-sacrifice and self-trust. He constantly repeated. "Be fearless, and none can harm you." Work was, according to him, the most effective and the best cure for all sorts of distractions and passions and temptations. Work, again, is a kind of unconscious realisation that keeps us pure, untainted. The positive joy which is the result of faithful work is its own reward. According to him renunciation need not necessarily be asceticism, but the crucifying the little self, or, in other words, self-sacrifice.

Poet Of Poets.

Swami Rama was a poet of poets. To him the song of the mountain stream was society enough. To him the birds talked the secrets of nature under the shady trees. To him was audible the music of the Cosmos and the latter was his beloved Incarnate Krishna in cosmic dance and trance. He saw, like Sri Chaitanya, beauty incarnate in the dancing waves of the sea, the storm in the forest. He loved to be one with nature and walked far into the dense forests, undaunted by the

possible risks by wild animals. Like all poets, he saw poetry in Nature.

Swami Rama's principle of the "Oneness of the Inner Man" is surely a great reconciliation of all the warring creeds and religions in this little world, India. His Gospel of Love is the remedy for preventing the useless waste of the national and individual energy, thus increasing the output of activity and work. His character, as the synthesis of all the Truth scattered in Science and Religion, is the model for the daily human conduct.

Swami Rama was the greatest apostle of Vedanta of his times, he was a demonstration of the Hindu Scriptures. He was the great exponent of Buddha's "Dharma—the Law." He stood up for perfect morality and total abstinence. His altruism was a simple habit of his soul. He was a veritable Spiritual physician; he said; "There is but one disease and one remedy. Nations can be cured and made free by the life of the Law, individuals can be made Saints by the same Law. 'Live in God,' make others live in

God,—believe this Truth, and you will be saved."

The Maharaja of Tehri was an ardent disciple of Swami Rama, and induced Rama to sail for Japan, where, a Parliament of Religions was in course of organisation, and in 1902 Rama sailed for Japan. This Parliament was never held for some reason, but the Indian merchants and students welcomed Rama in a fitting way. Rama was much impressed by the active life of the Japanese, and their progressive spirit drew his admiration. He gave several lectures to the Japanese in English and the Japanese were awe-struck by his brilliance and knowledge. Prof. Hirai, a great Japanese who knew English, wrote: "I see his smiles still floating in the air like plum flowers." Another, who heard his lecture on "Secret of Success" confessed that to him it "seemed that he was a column of fire and his words the little live sparks that flowed about it." Some others ever remembered the purity sparkling in his forehead, which was like the snowy summit of their beloved "Fujiyama."

After a few weeks stay in Japan Rama sailed for San Francisco. After the Vivekananda's visit America was keenly expecting a Saint of the Vivekananda mould, and naturally Rama was hailed and most enthusiastically received.

At a large gathering of the Religious League at St. Louis Exhibition the only bright spot in the gathering was Swami Rama.

In America Rama gave a fresh and still ampler interpretation of "Vedanta" on the lines chalked out by Vivekananda. According to critics Rama excelled Vivekananda in inspired cheerfulness, in the beam of the Unknown that played on his forehead, in the sweetness of song, in the shy maidenly grace of "Bhakti".

Fiery Orations in America

For two years Rama astonished the Americans with his fiery orations on Vedanta. The Americans were struck by his bold independence of thought and his towering intellect. Rama asked the Americans to think for themselves, and realise God in their daily life. Rama declared boldly that life itself

was the greatest of revelations. Theologies and dogmas had very little to do with the inner religion of the living man. In Rama's words: "Do not rely on authorities, for in Religion, as in Science, Truth ought to be got at through experiments."

The subject-headings that Rama gave to his lectures were original and unique. They included: "Every Day a New Year's Day, and Every Night a X'mas night"—(this was on a X'mas Eve), What are You? History and Home of Happiness, Diagnosis, Cause and Cure of Sin, Illumination, Expansion of Self, The Light of Lights, Realism and Idealism Reconciled, Realisation of God through Love, Practical Vedanta, The Secret of Success.

Rama summed up his teachings thus: Divinity of Man. The world is bound to co-work with one who feels himself one with the whole world. Keeping the body in active struggle and the mind in rest and love, means salvation from sin and sorrow right here in this life. Active realisation of At-one-ment with the All allows as a life of balanced

recklessness. The Sacred Scriptures of all the world should be taken in the same light as we study Chemistry, holding our own experiences for ultimate authority.

Rama gave a characteristic message to the people of the "Land of the Dollars" that they cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time. Rama gave lectures and discourses at many American Universities on practical "Vedanta," and called it the "Common Path" Rama said that his religion is not Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Christianity, nor Protestantism, but that it was antagonistic to none. Rama said that the overlapping area, covered by the Light, the Sun, the Stars, the Rivers, the Gravity, the Mind and Body, this was the field of his Religion. He asked them whether there were any Presbyterians' lilies and Methodist landscapes? Rama said that his religion had no name (rather nick-name), and that it was the Religion of Nature. Said Rama: "I label none, brand none, possess none, but serve all alike like the Light and the Sun, and I call it "The Common Path."

Rama threw into the sea all the laudatory documents of newspapers and other institutions about him. At Shasta Spring Rama lived with Dr. Hillier and worked like a common labourer. Rama also loved to roam about in the mountains and on the banks of the rivers. Rama said he was happier than the President of the United States. The Americans admired the wonderful powers of Rama's oratory. In him they saw a perennial spring of joy and it bubbled forth in sweet songs and laughing words. They felt Rama's laughter had taken away their sorrows. At a lake resort all the patients in a sanatorium were cheered by Rama, and they went back completely cured. They called him "Rama the Healer", 'Rama, the conqueror of hearts.' Rama's personality was irresistible, and the manager of the Great Pacific Railway gave Rama the pullman car free.

Appeal to America

Rama's mission in America was twofold. He appealed to the Americans to encourage Indian boys to study world conditions, and to infuse in them the spirit of adventure.

Rama was also much concerned with the political subjection of India, his heart throbbed at her helplessness. Rama burst forth in emotion and chanted the sacred syllable "Om". Rama's second mission was to spread the "Vedantic" teachings.

In several places "Rama Societies" were formed. Rama was in America for two years and left a lasting impression on the Americans. Two American opinions are recorded here:

A San Francisco paper wrote of him:—

"Out of the jungles of Upper India has come a man of astounding wisdom, a prophet, philosopher, scientist, who comes to preach a new gospel of unselfishness and spiritual power to the idolatrous worshippers of the mighty dollar. He is a Brahmin of Brahmins, a Goswami of the highest caste, and he is known among his brethren as Swami Rama."

"This remarkable sage of the Himalayas is a slender intellectual young man with the ascetic mould of a priest and the light complexion of a high caste Brahmin. His fore-

head is broad and high, his head splendidly developed, his nose thin and delicate as a woman's, while his chin reveals great firmness of will. A wide, kindly, tender mouth parts freely over dazzlingly white perfect teeth in a smile that seems to light up all surroundings and wins instantaneous confidence and good will of all those who come within the circle of its radiance."

Another paper stated:—

"His mission in America is two-fold. Primarily it is to interest Americans in his own countrymen. It is his object to bring Hindu boys to American colleges, where they may imbibe not only American learning but American push and independence and the spirit of American freedom, that they in turn may return to their own land and teach their own people. In this way he hopes to break off the terrible apathy and rigid system of caste that prevails in India. His second object is to spread his philosophy, his glorious Gospel of Man's Oneness with the Eternal."

In 1905 Rama left America, and on his way back to India, visited Egypt, and was

given a hearty welcome by the Mohammedans. Rama delivered a lecture in Persian in their Great Mosque. The Egyptian papers declared Swami Rama as a great genius, to meet whom was one of the greatest privileges. Prof. Taka Kutsu, one of the then Sanskrit Professors of the Tokyo Imperial University remarked that Rama was the only true Indian philosopher he had seen.

Puran Singh, a poet, biographer, and ardent disciple of Rama, wrote that Rama was immensely changed in his outlook after his American tour, and wrote:—"There was a flash from Rama's eyes, when he said:—'Sacrifice will secure the freedom of this country, Rama's head must go, then Puran's, then of a hundred others before the country can be free. India, Mother India, must be free.'—I was astonished. This was not the talk he gave us at Tokyo, where I first met him."

"Rama's heart throbbed with pain at the fallen state of his Motherland. He was pained at the lethargy of the masses and of the selfish greed of the educated and at the

hatreds and animosities between the various sects. According to Rama, "The gigantic forces in India of teeming millions do not co-work, do not co-operate. One force nullifies the other, one force counterbalances the other, and consequently the resultant national force is nothing. The superstitions centering of love in outward ritual forms, the blind focussing of feelings in ceremonies and external bodies and ignorant and implicit faith reposed in the reality of appearances, and rigidity of circumstances has brought about race hatred, sectarianism, party spirit, and caste feelings to such an extent that the people cannot put their wills together and cannot produce the marvellous dynamic power which always accrues to a nation from a practical realization of underlying unity and oneness despite all phenomenal differences. And this lack of applied Vedanta among the masses makes India a house divided against itself. The relations among the numerous parties are miserably strained. That is the bane of India, and this spirit of division is inflamed and encouraged by the alien rulers."

Rama exhorts the children of the soil to adapt themselves to the changing times, and utters a stern warning:— Remember that you live in “time” as well as in “space.” You are descended from the ancient Rishis of India, but you live not in their age now. Steam engines, steam ships, telegraphs, &c. are at you. You can no longer shut yourselves off from the present world; your struggle is with the twentieth century scientists, artists, and workmen of Europe and America. You cannot survive except by making yourselves fit to live in the altered environment of this age.

According to Swami Rama much time is wasted in the study of the old Laws and “Shastras.” He says: “the capacity of quoting big long texts to show off our learning, nonsensical hairsplitting to torture the sense of passages in the scriptures, the study of subjects which we never have to use in life, is not education. The taking of knowledge which we cannot practise is spiritual constipation or mental dyspepsia.”

Warning to Nation.

Rama warns the Nation to beware of its Laws, and says: “Try to save the Grammar-

and the language will be dead. Just so the rigidity of the Laws. Customs and "Karmakand" and the vitality of the Nation is sapped. These are helpful only for a time like the husk for the protection and preservation of the seed, but if not changed after a while, they become the choking prison, impeding all growth. The Laws and "Smritis" are for you, and not you for them. Spread the teaching of the Eternal "Shruti" but adapt yourselves to the needs of the times. The rivers have changed their courses, the snow lines are shifted, the forests are replaced by cultivated fields, the face of the country is altered, governments have changed, languages have changed in this inconsistent, transient world, ye seek to perpetuate the rules and customs of the past, which, alas! is no more! Sad indeed is the state of one who looks behind! for, he stumbles at every step!"

Rama was a great patriot; with a mad joy he sings: "I am the whole of India, the land of India is my body, the Comorin is my feet, the Himalayas my head, from my hair flows the Ganges, from my head comes the

Brahmaputra and the Indus; the Vindhya-chalās are girt round my loins; "I am India, I am Shankara, I am Shiva, this is the highest realisation of patriotism and this is practical Vedanta." Tune yourself in love with your country and the people; be a spiritual soldier, and lay down your life in the interests of your land, abnegate the little "Ego," and having thus become the whole country, feel anything and the country will feel with you. "March and your country will follow !"

According to Swami Rama, the poverty and degradation and political subjection of India is the result of our sins, and he deplored that the vitality and originality of the Great Nation is disappearing, and orthodoxy has come to mean exclusiveness and dumb conservatism....and, alas ! India has paid very dearly for all these, and invited foreign races from Afghanistan, Greece, Persia and Britain.

With all the foregoing pessimistic note, Swami Rama was hopeful, and like the Great Vivekananda before him, was full of irresistible optimism, and saw the streaks of the coming dawn—in his own charming words:

"There was a time when the Sun of Wisdom and Wealth shone at the zenith of glory in India, but then it gradually began to march westwards.....Now that it is day in America, the night of poverty and pain is hovering over India but lo ! the Sun seems already crossing over the Pacific and Japan bids fair to be among the foremost powers of the world, and, if the Laws of Nature are to be trusted, the Sun of wealth and wisdom complete his revolution and once more on India, with splendour Those who sleep well in the night wake well, and healthy. India has slept enough—most surely, though slowly the lethargy is breaking." I wish as an Indian that my country should be free. Free it shall be one day but whether this Rama secures its freedom or a thousand other Ramas no one knows."

Rama had great ideas of organisation for the spiritual and material uplift of the country, but he could not go to rich men and Maharajas to secure the wherewithal, it was beyond his powers. Rama's last days were spent in the various Ashrams in the Hima-

layas, mostly in study, and in giving discourses to spiritual aspirants. Even his American devotees came to see him.

Last Message.

To the youth of India Rama had a distinct message; "Be fearless, and none can harm you". Rama defined the essentials of success as fearlessness, work for its own sake, self-sacrifice, and self-trust.

Like all other prophets and saints Rama had a Divine warning of his approaching end. He was conscious of its approach, and wrote out in beautiful Urdu a farewell message, (the last recorded message of Rama), which, when translated reads as follows (the beauty of the original is lost in the translation):—

"Oh Death, take away this body if you will. I have many more bodies to live with. I can afford to live happily wearing the silver threads of the moon, and the golden rays of the sun. I shall roam free, singing in the guise of hilly brooks and streams. I shall be dancing happily in the waves of the

sea. I am the graceful gait of the breeze and I am the wind inebriated. These forms of mine are wandering forms of change. I came down from the tops, knocked at doors, awakened the sleeping, consoled one, wiped the tears of another, covered some, took off the veils of others, I doff my hat, and off I am. I keep nothing with me. Nobody can find me."

Shortly after the farewell message was written. Rama went to bathe in the biling Ganga, near Tehri Garhwal, and was accidentally drowned. This was in October 1906, when Rama was a youth of thirty-three, and thus his brief but bright saintly career came to a sudden end.

Short as Rama's life was, he left a rich spiritual legacy which the generations that come after him will cherish with gratitude, living true to the ideals of Hindu Dharma, which, to this day is the admiration of the whole world. Although during his lifetime many of his admirers urged him to establish Societies, Rama did not agree, saying that he would prefer to work through the existing ones.

It might be well to conclude this article by saying that such leading genius comes into this world only for a short time; not to "finish" their plan, but simply to suggest it to their survivors. Like lightning their work is only suggestive, and never exhaustive. They throw some guiding hints to the world and disappear; they form part of the great constructive force working in its inscrutable ways.

May Rama's life and teachings be a guide and inspiration to all!

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